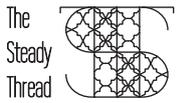


## Botanical Blackwork SfL 2024 – Introduction



Welcome to year 5 of this free year-long weekly blackwork SfL with a botanical theme !

If you have joined in before you will know I am passionate about blackwork embroidery and plants. If you choose to join in this year hopefully we can grow something nice together! This introduction will try to explain how everything will work, but if you do have any questions, please contact me by using the contact form on my website, email [clare@thesteadythread.com](mailto:clare@thesteadythread.com) or get in touch via my FB group (The Steady Thread Blackwork SfL), and I will do my best to help.

### Access

To access this SfL you can either join my SfL Facebook group or access via my website. Access via my website is free, but you will need to go through the checkout process so that you are automatically added to the access list.

### Schedule

Templates are now available via my website or FB group.

The first instalment will be released on Monday 1st January and then after that, we will revert to Friday releases, so the next design will be released on Friday 5th Jan and then every Friday for forty-nine weeks again in total, meaning the final chart will be released on 29/11/24.

### Layouts

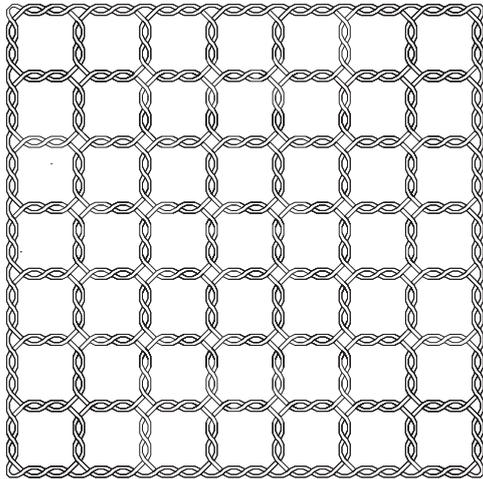
This year flowers in vases make a return! This time in a much more structured fashion, each vase has a symmetrical arrangement and the overall design has a loose symmetry, reminiscent of traditional samplers. Each vase will feature a blackwork fill. Some vases are bigger than others, some are very tiny, hopefully these will give you a little rest or time to catch up here and there if needed.

Each week the chart will show you where you need to stitch it, either in relation to the vase that was stitched before or, in the case of the first vase, in relation to the square you are instructed to mark out at the start.

There is also a square 'weavey' template which forms a winding stem that your flowers will grow from each week. You may want to bear this in mind when choosing colours as the additions will directly come from this main frame as shown in the headed photo above. Each week contains both leaves/stems and a flower/bud. The weekly charts suggest which parts of the addition should be green and there is also a key included each week with the weekly chart to show you where each design belongs in the layout, they do jump about a little and you can place them differently to the way the key indicates if you wish, but they have been positioned to give a balanced design, so please bear this in mind if going off-road!

Finally there are 3 mini templates, one can be used with the weavey additions, the other 2 will have their own fills. I thought it might be nice to include some low impact, less of a commitment type templates. You can fill the small weavey one with your favourite additions throughout the year, make smaller seasonal blocks etc. The mini bees design will have non-botanical fills provided (but just 7 to fill the design, rather than 19) and likewise there will be just 6 additions for the little geometric flowers template. If you choose to do this one you'll be adding a single, quite geometric bloom to the spaces. The designs for these minis will be released every other week and once they are finished, if they are popular, I might add some more throughout the year!

### Weavey layout



Design size in stitches 172 w x 172 h

Size on 14 count Aida

32 x 32 cm

12.5 x 12.5 inches

Size on 16 count Aida

28 x 28 cm

11 x 11 inches approx

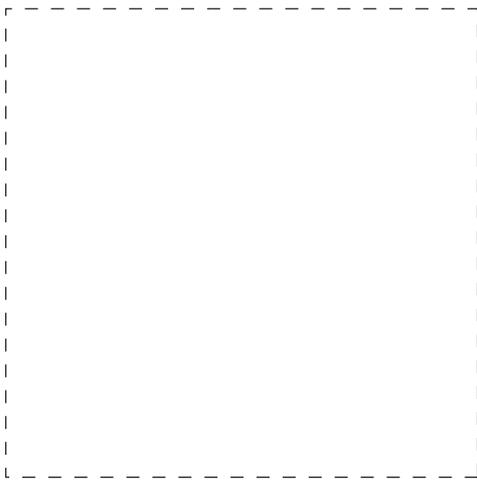
Size on 18 count Aida

25 x 25 cm

10 x 10 inches approx

### Vases layout

All you need to do to get started with this layout is mark out a square 164 x 164 stitches in basting stitches and you are ready!



Design size in stitches 164 w x 164 h

Size on 14 count Aida

30 x 30 cm

12 x 12 inches approx

Size on 16 count Aida

26 x 26 cm

10.5 x 10.5 inches approx

Size on 18 count Aida

23 x 23 cm

9.5 x 9.5 inches approx

### Mini layouts

#### Mini weavey

Design size in stitches 76 w x 76 h

Size on 14 count Aida

14 x 14 cm

5.5 x 5.5 inches approx

Size on 16 count Aida

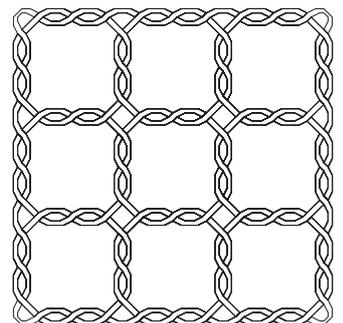
12 x 12 cm

5 x 5 inches approx

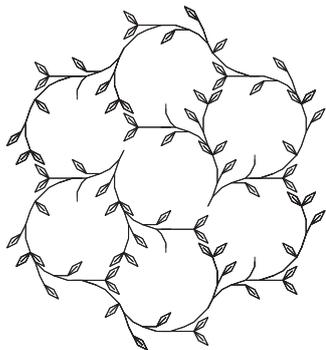
Size on 18 count Aida

11 x 11 cm

4.5 x 4.5 inches approx



## Mini geometric flowers



Design size in stitches 68 w x 74 h

Size on 14 count Aida  
12.5 x 13.5 cm  
5 x 5.5 inches approx

Size on 16 count Aida  
11 x 12 cm  
4.5 x 5 inches approx

Size on 18 count Aida  
10 x 10.5 cm  
4 x 4.5 inches approx

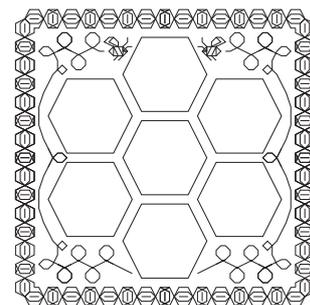
## Mini bees

Design size in stitches 64 w x 64 h

Size on 14 count Aida  
12 x 12 cm  
4.5 x 4.5 inches approx

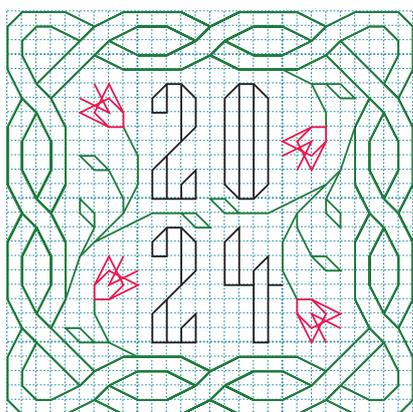
Size on 16 count Aida  
10 x 10 cm  
4 x 4 inches approx

Size on 18 count Aida  
9 x 9 cm  
3.5 x 3.5 inches approx



## Colour!

Each of the designs has an accompanying guide to show you where you could put colour if you wish as shown in this example chart.



How to start planning colours? We had a great suggestion one year about planning a palette, it was to find something you like, a print on a scarf, wallpaper etc and to take a section of colours from this as your colour range.

I've not used it myself but [Stitch Palettes](https://stitchpalettes.com/) seems to be a fantastic free resource if you have something you like the colour of and would like some help translating these colours into thread codes (<https://stitchpalettes.com/>) Or you could choose a single colour for all designs, we have seen some lovely single colour versions in previous years. I would also suggest having a browse through the SFL galleries on my website for inspiration!

I've designed numerous colour pieces and it is often surprising how colours come out when stitched compared to how they look in a skein or on a spool. My advice would be . . . experiment, test and compare!

Blank layouts for planning colours are available for weavey and vases (the vases one just shows a block where each vase/flower will go)

## Thread Usage

I'm often asked about thread usage, but it is very difficult to predict how much thread will be used as it very much depends on what type of stitch you use (backstitch uses more than double running) your fabric count and also your stitching style, so I am going to not really commit. I'm afraid, I would recommend using a thread that will still be available should you run short!

## Borders

There is quite a lot going on in these designs so I've left them borderless. I am more than happy for you to add your own, you may want to let the SfL progress a bit before committing to anything! There is blank graph paper in the files for doodling purposes !

So to recap the 2024 SfL layouts files provided are:

- Layout PDF for weavey design (multi and single page versions)
- A1 single page information sheet for the size square you need to baste for the vase layout – that is all you need to get started!
- Blank layouts for planning colours for weavey and vases
- Graph paper in case you would like to design borders/text/other layout
- Mini layouts, all 3 designs are in one document (single and multi-page versions)

If you have joined in previously you will know that you are very welcome to be imaginative with this SfL. In years gone by we have had many different layouts and ways fills were used, always a joy to see.

We have had text and poems added, chessboards stitched, biscornu and fabric dice, greetings cards, little fabric books, pillows, quilts so feel free to exercise your creative side if you feel inclined to, but of course, you are also most welcome to stitch up a template and simply add your stitching as the weeks roll by!

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[www.thesteadythread.com](http://www.thesteadythread.com)

 The Steady Thread Blackwork SfL  The Steady Thread Modern Blackwork Embroidery

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