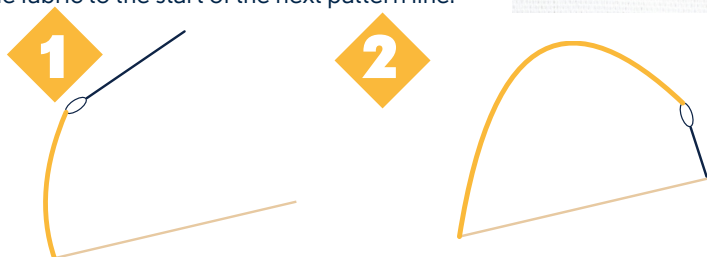


Let's get stitching!

Center your fabric over the inner hoop and press the outer hoop over the top. Tighten the pin until your fabric is taut. Pick a color of thread and cut off about 18 inches. Pull it apart in half so that you are only working with 3 strands of thread, instead of 6. Finally, thread your needle and tie a knot at the other end. Now you can start stitching. Woohoo! You can start anywhere and you'll be finished when you've covered all the pattern lines on the fabric. Don't worry about jumping around; no one will know.

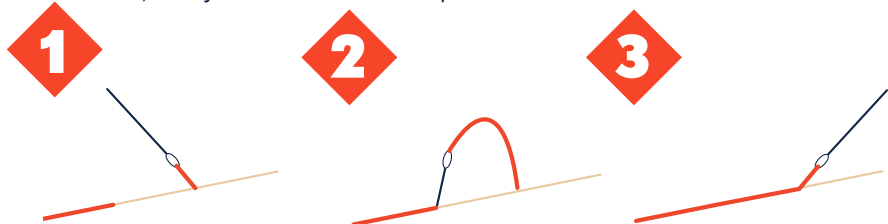
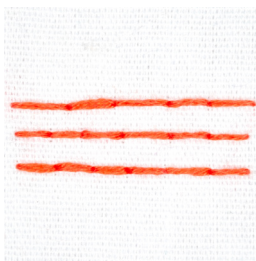
Running Stitch:

It's always best to start easy and it doesn't get any easier than the running stitch. Think of this stitch as sewing confetti. You simply come up through the fabric at the start of a short pattern line and down again at the end. Your stitch will be about $\frac{1}{4}$ " long. You'll repeat these steps as much as needed, jumping around under the fabric to the start of the next pattern line.



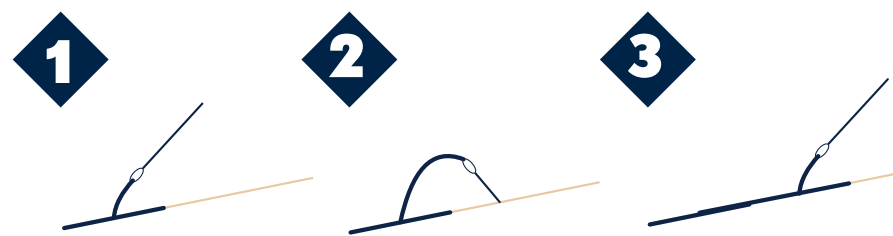
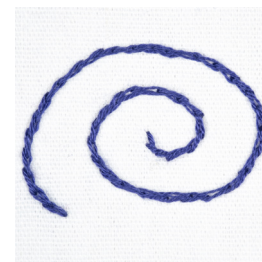
Back Stitch:

Sometimes, you just want a clean, straight line. For that, you'll love the back stitch. Start with a running stitching. Under the fabric, jump ahead $\frac{1}{4}$ " on the pattern line and come up. Then go back down the same hole that started the running stitch. Now you have 2 running stitches end to end. Come up again at the far end of the second stitch and continue to make another running stitch. Repeat these steps, stitching forwards and backwards, until you have covered the pattern line.



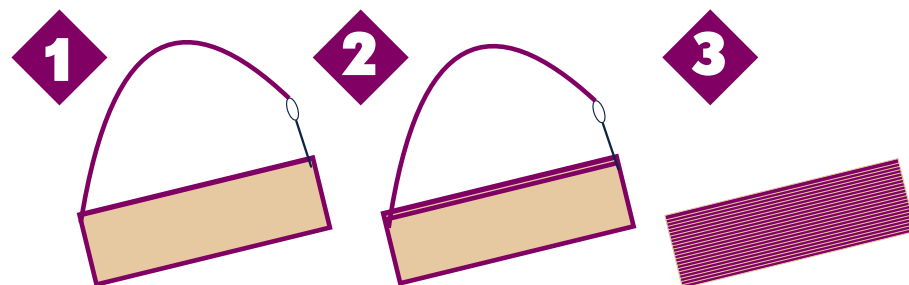
Split Stitch:

Nothing beats a nice curve. Split stitches are perfect for curves because you get to control how tight or loose they are by using shorter or longer stitches respectively. Start with a running stitch. Then come back up halfway through your last stitch. Your needle will come up between the threads. Since I use 3 strands to sew, my needle has 2 strands of thread to one side and 1 to the other. Now go back down through the fabric $\frac{1}{4}$ " further along the pattern line, making a second running stitch. Repeat this until you have covered the pattern line.



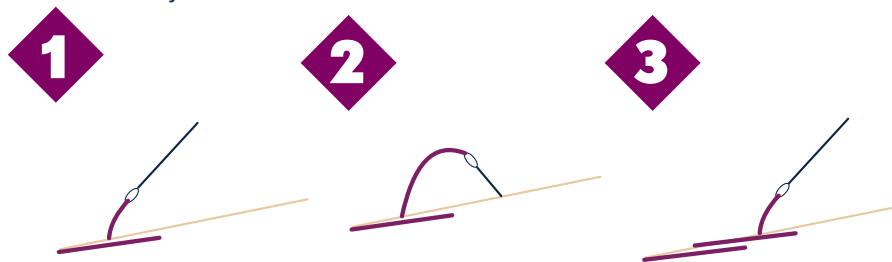
Satin Stitch:

Bold is beautiful and it doesn't get bolder than satin stitch. Start by outlining the area you want to fill with back stitches. These stitches act like a mini corral for your satin stitches. Now start at the top or bottom of the area you're filling and make a running stitch that stretches across the entire area from left to right. Jump back to the left side under the fabric and make another running stitch just above or below the first. Repeat this until the area is filled in completely. If the space feels too wide for a running stitch, you can use back stitches instead to ensure the fabric doesn't warp.



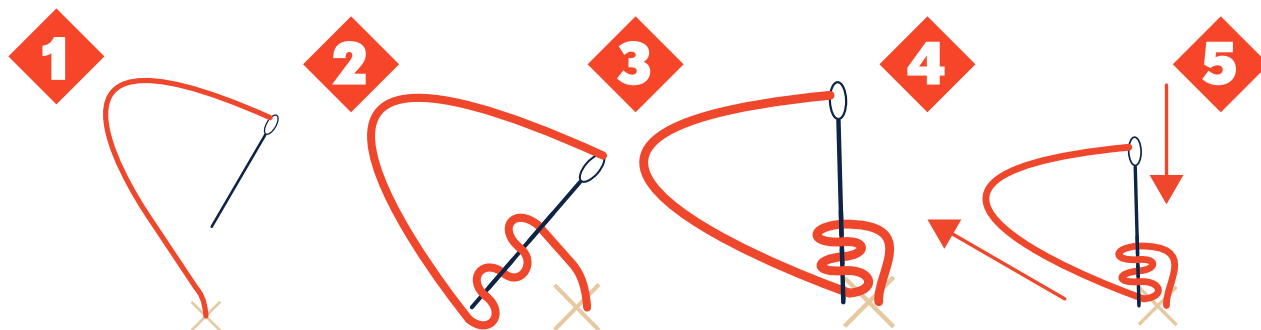
Stem Stitch:

This stitch is great for curving lines and is almost identical to a split stitch. The difference? You come up beside the thread instead of splitting it. Start with a running stitch. Come back up through the fabric at the halfway point of the last stitch but to one side of it. Go back down through the fabric about $\frac{1}{4}$ " further along the pattern line, making a second running stitch. Repeat this until you have covered the pattern line. You'll work at a slight diagonal across the pattern line and keep to the same side of your stitches.



French Knot:

You can do this! I avoided this stitch for years and now I wish I'd known how easy it was because I love it. So let's make some knots! You'll need both hands to do this stitch so set your hoop on a table or in your lap. Come up where you want the knot. With your non-needle hand, hold the thread a few inches above the fabric. Pull the thread taut. Place your needle in front of the thread and wind the thread around it twice. Keep the needle still for this, wrapping with the thread instead, but also keep the thread taut so it doesn't fall off the end of the needle. Re-insert the tip of your needle next to, but not into, the hole you originally came up. Keep your needle steady with just the tip through the fabric while you give the thread a downward tug with your non-needle hand. This will coil the thread. Push the needle through the fabric and Bam! You have a knot!



Chain Stitch:

I honestly didn't know about this chunky, textured stitch until recently and then I learned to do it the 'cheating' way. Apparently this makes it super easy to sew so that's the way I'm going to teach you. First, sew a small running stitch. Come up $\frac{1}{4}$ " ahead of the stitch on the pattern line and pass the needle through your small running stitch. Pull the thread tight. Go back down the same hole you just came up. Basically, you're making a running stitch that got hooked by the first stitch. Come up $\frac{1}{4}$ " ahead on the pattern line and pass your needle through the bottom of the last stitch, hooking the thread again. Pull tight and go back down the hole you started the stitch in. Continue and repeat, linking your stitches together by passing your needle through the bottom of the last one.

