

Sugar Skull Stitch Sampler



TIPS & TRICKS

EMBROIDERY HOOP

One side of the inner hoop reads **THIS SIDE UP**. Keep this hoop face up and place the fabric over top. Press outer hoop down over fabric and under the lip of inner hoop. Carefully pull the fabric taut without distorting the pattern. Tighten the nut.

CUTTING FLOSS

You don't want to use too much or too little thread. Use floss at about 14"-18" in length. The longer your floss is, the more easily it will tangle. At the same time, you don't want your floss to be too short or else you will constantly have to re-thread your needle. A quick and easy way to measure an ideal length of thread is to pinch the end of the thread between your thumb and index finger, extend your arm and measure to the crease of your elbow.

SEPARATING FLOSS

Most embroidery flosses, DMC included, are comprised of 6 easily separable strands that allow for various thicknesses of stitches by using a different number of strands. To separate the floss into individual strands, pull the number of strands you need until they are separate from the rest and smooth them out with your thumb and forefinger before threading them onto your needle.

THREADING THE NEEDLE

Before threading your needle make a knot on one end of your thread. Leave a 3" to 4" tail hanging as you work on the embroidery.



STARTING A STITCH

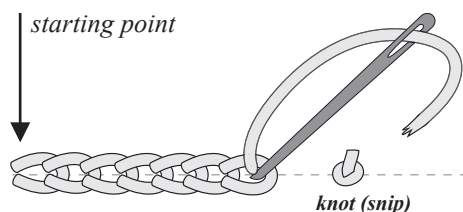
The back of an embroidery is just as important as the front! A back side filled with knots and tangled threads makes it very difficult to produce neat and

beautiful stitches. For this reason, I recommend starting and stopping stitches without leaving knots. There are several ways to achieve this:

Waste Knot

The Waste Knot works best when you are stitching a line and there are no previous stitches on which to anchor your thread.

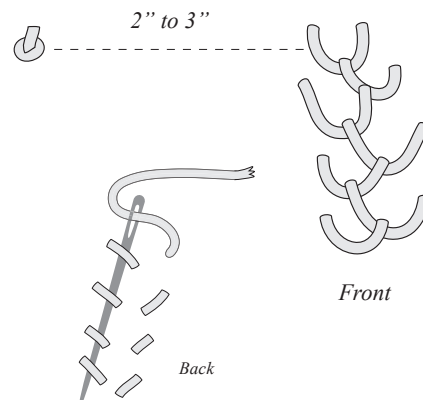
To begin, take the needle from the front to the back about 1" from your starting point, leaving a knot on the front side of your fabric. Take the needle through the start-



ing point and stitch towards the knot, ensuring that each stitch helps to secure the thread on the back. Snip the knot with scissors just before reaching it.

Away Knot

The Away Knot is a good choice when you are stitching detached stitches and there are no previous stitches on which to anchor your thread. To begin, take the needle a few inches from the starting point, leaving a knot on the front side of your fabric. When you finish stitching with your thread snip the knot. Turn over your hoop and re-thread the needle with the loose piece of thread, weaving it through stitches until it is securely in place.

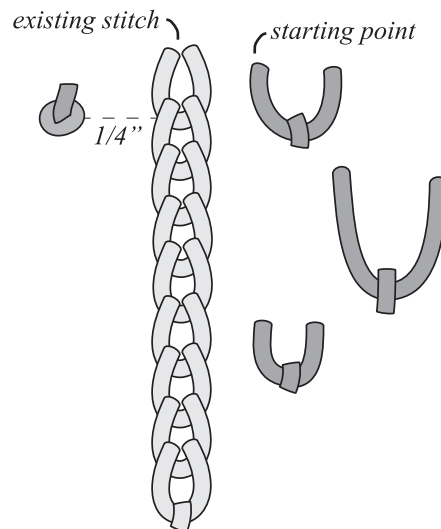


Anchor Stitch

If you are stitching over an area that will be filled (i.e. with Satin Stitch) you can make a Straight Stitch, then a perpendicular stitch into it, securing it in place (in the shape of a 'T').

Knot & Weave

Once there are stitches to which you can secure a new thread, you can commence a new stitch with a far shorter version of the Away Knot, placed 1/4" inch away from the anchoring stitches and close to your starting point. Weave into the back of these stitches and snip the knot away once the thread is secure. Begin your new stitch.



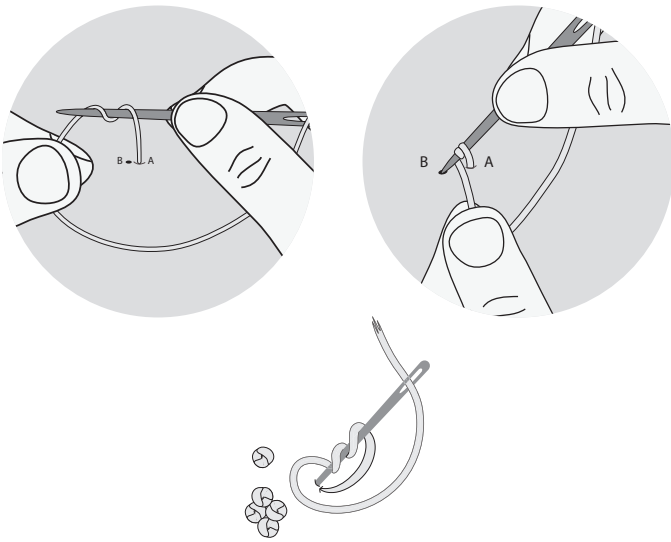
ENDING A THREAD

When you are getting close to the end of your thread leave enough so that it is easy to secure by weaving through several stitches on the back side of the embroidery. If you are halfway through a stitch do not attempt to tie on a new thread and continue stitching. Treat it as a finished stitch and commence anew with a new thread using one of the methods described in the previous section.

USE 1 STRAND OF FLOSS FOR SATIN STITCH, 2 STRANDS FOR OTHER STITCHES

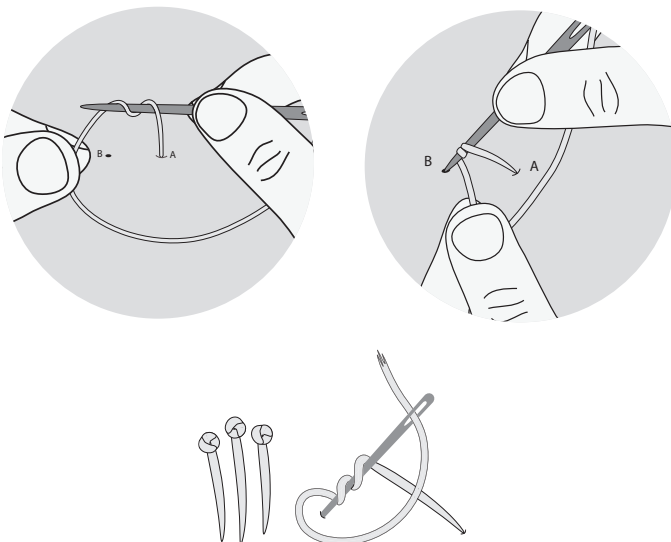
French Knot

Bring the thread out where you want to place your knot. With your left thumb and index finger pull the thread firmly to the left. Wrap the thread around the needle twice, and angle the needle close to where the thread first emerged (but not in the exact place or it will pull through) slightly piercing through the fabric. Give the thread a tug, tightening up the coil. Slide the coil down towards the fabric and, keeping the tension, pull the needle through to the back, leaving a small knot on the surface. You can make single knots or clusters of knots by placing them close together.



Pistil Stitch

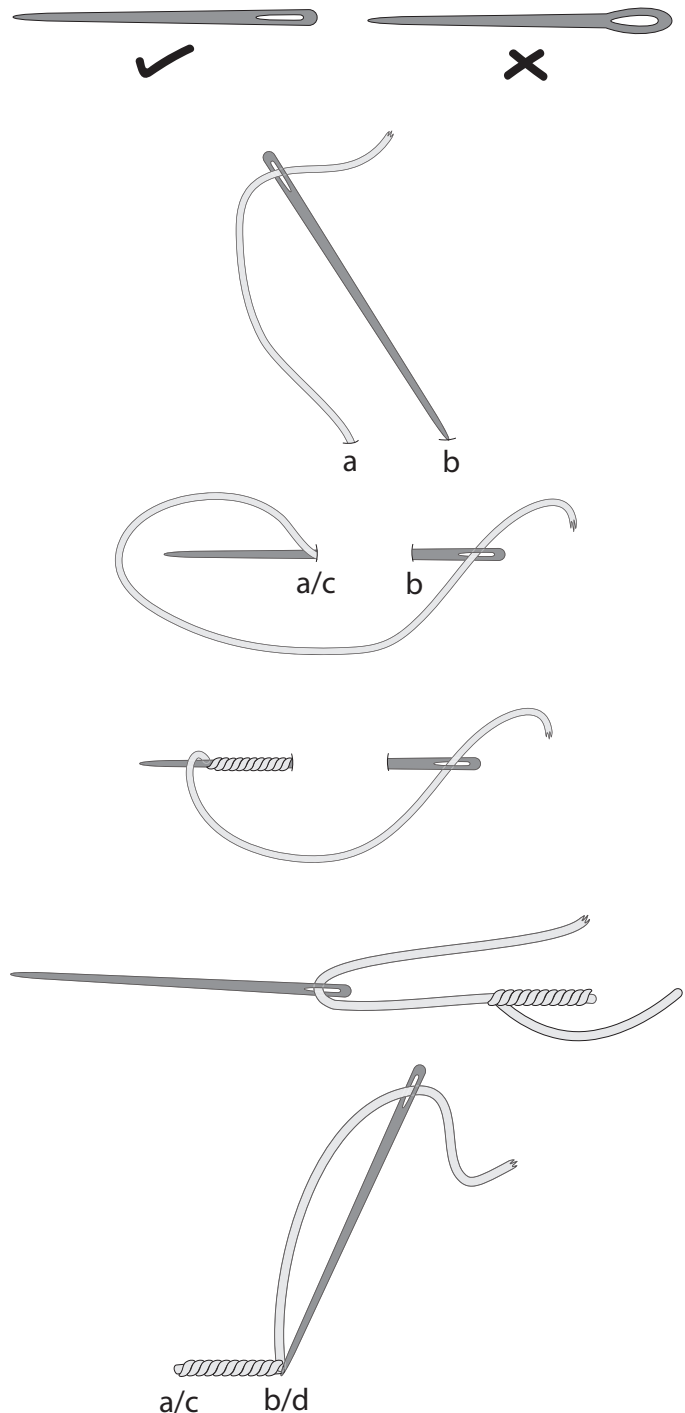
Follow the same directions as the French Knot, but place the 'b' point at a greater distance, creating a tail between the entrance point and the knot.



Bullion Knot

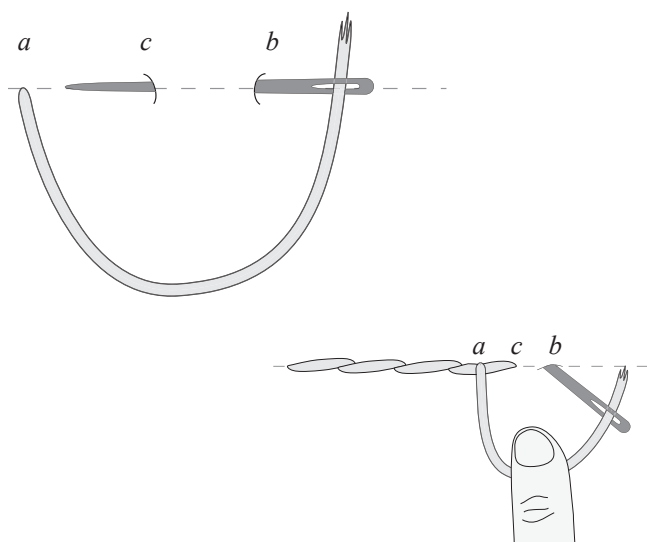
Come out at (a) and go back into the fabric at (b): the space in between these two points will be the length of your knot. Come back out at (a) and wrap the needle with the floss until the coil is the same length as the distance between (a) and (b). Use your finger to push the coils down as you wrap. Gently hold the coil in place as you slide the needle through. Go back in at (b).

Note: only use a needle with an eye that is similar in width to the shaft of the needle



Stem Stitch

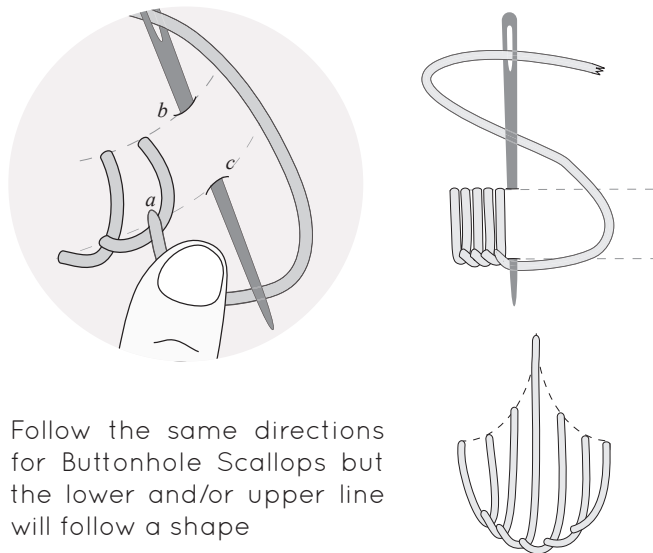
The Stem Stitch creates a twisted rope effect, perfect for filling in straight or curved lines. It can be used to fill an area by stitching parallel lines very close to one another. To begin the Stem Stitch, come out at your starting point (a). Bring the needle out a stitch length's away (b), keeping the working thread below the needle (you can use your thumb to hold the thread down). Come out halfway between (a) and (b) at (c). Repeat these steps along the path you are stitching.



Buttonhole Stitch/ Buttonhole Scallop

The Buttonhole Stitch (a.k.a. Blanket Stitch) creates a rope-like effect that's ideal for finishing edges of a design (you see this stitch on the edges of fleece blankets). Worked as a wheel or in scallops, it is a beautiful decorative stitch. Stitches can be made very close together or spaced out.

Bring the thread out on the lower line at (a). Insert the needle on the upper line one space to the right at (b). Catch the thread with your thumb and take a straight downward stitch to (c), ensuring that the working thread is under the needle. Repeat.



Follow the same directions for Buttonhole Scallops but the lower and/or upper line will follow a shape

Fishbone Stitch

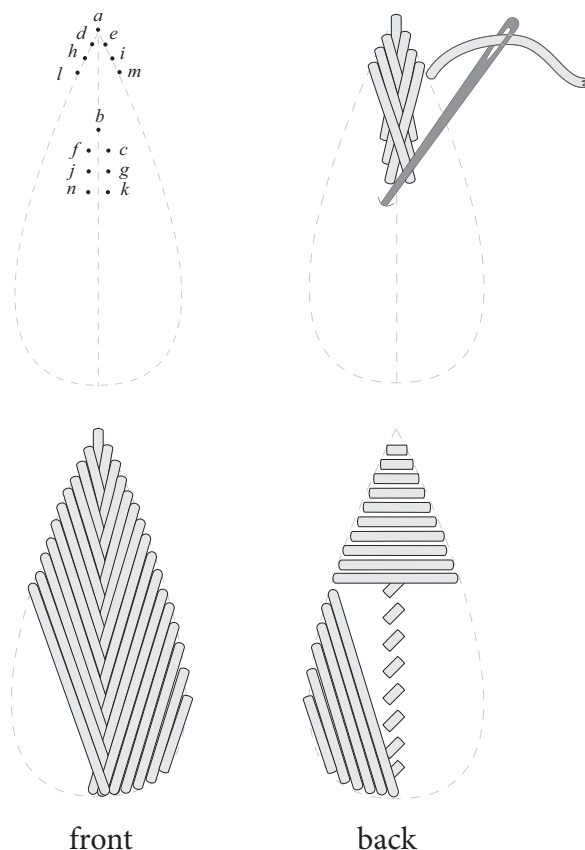
The Fishbone Stitch is a series of straight stitches that cross over one another, creating a plaited line down the center of a shape. It is a fantastic stitch to use for leaves and feathers.

Begin by making a stitch from (a) to (b), about 1/4 of the way down the shape. Come up at (c), just below and to the right of (b), and go back through (d), which will cross over to the center line, up and to the left. Come out at (e) and cross over the center line, down and to the left at (f). Continue to fill out the shape following this pattern, ensuring that there is no fabric showing through between the stitches.

To keep the stitch direction parallel, and avoid overlapping, the points of entry down the center line should be spaced out more than the stitches around the perimeter of the shape.

Eventually, you will run out of room to cross over down the center line. Round out the shape using straight stitches (unpadded Satin Stitch).

The diagram to the right shows the front and back of the stitch, with only one side completed with straight stitches.



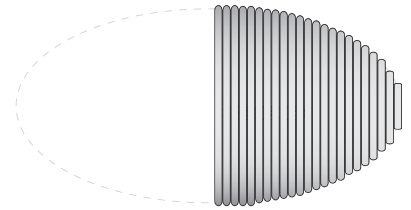
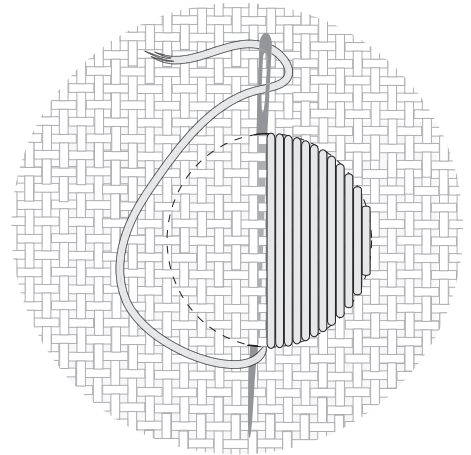
Unpadded Satin Stitch

Mastering the Satin Stitch is essential. It is one of the most straight forward stitches - straight stitches parallel to one another - yet possibly the most difficult to perfect. Generally, I recommend to use a Splut Stitch padding under a Satin Stitch, but based on this embroidery pattern, padding is not necessary.

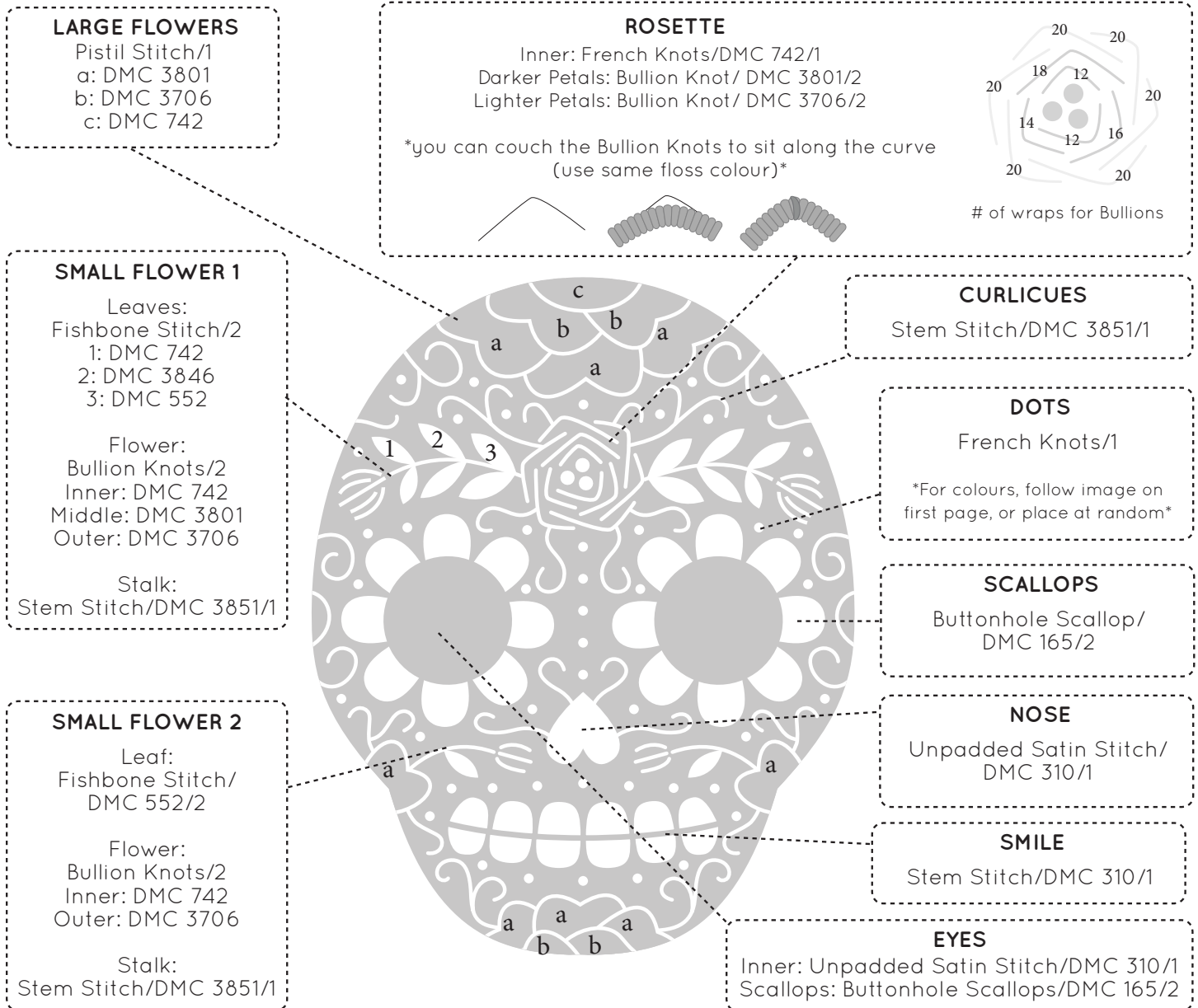
Here are a few rules to live by:

- 1) **Use only 1 strand of floss at a time.** It will take longer to cover the area, but will result in the smooth texture and sheen that give the stitch its name
- 2) **Use the fabric's woven texture as your guide.** Move through the fabric one thread at a time - this will keep the stitches perfectly parallel.
- 3) **Start from the widest point of a pattern and work to one end, before going back and working the stitch towards the opposite end**

The satin stitch requires patience, finesse, and an observant eye, but once you perfect this stitch the quality look of your embroideries will increase exponentially.



NOW PUT IT ALL TOGETHER!



EMBROIDER THESE ELEMENTS IN THE FOLLOWING ORDER:

LARGE FLOWERS

outer to inner

SMALL FLOWERS

inner to outer

EYES

inside, then scallops

ROSETTE

inner to outer

Key for Stitch Diagram:

Chain Stitch/DMC 732/1

type of stitch

colour

of strands to use

COLOURS:

Green: DMC 3851

Light Pink: DMC 3706

Dark Pink: DMC 3801

Blue: DMC 3846

Purple: DMC 552

Yellow: DMC 742

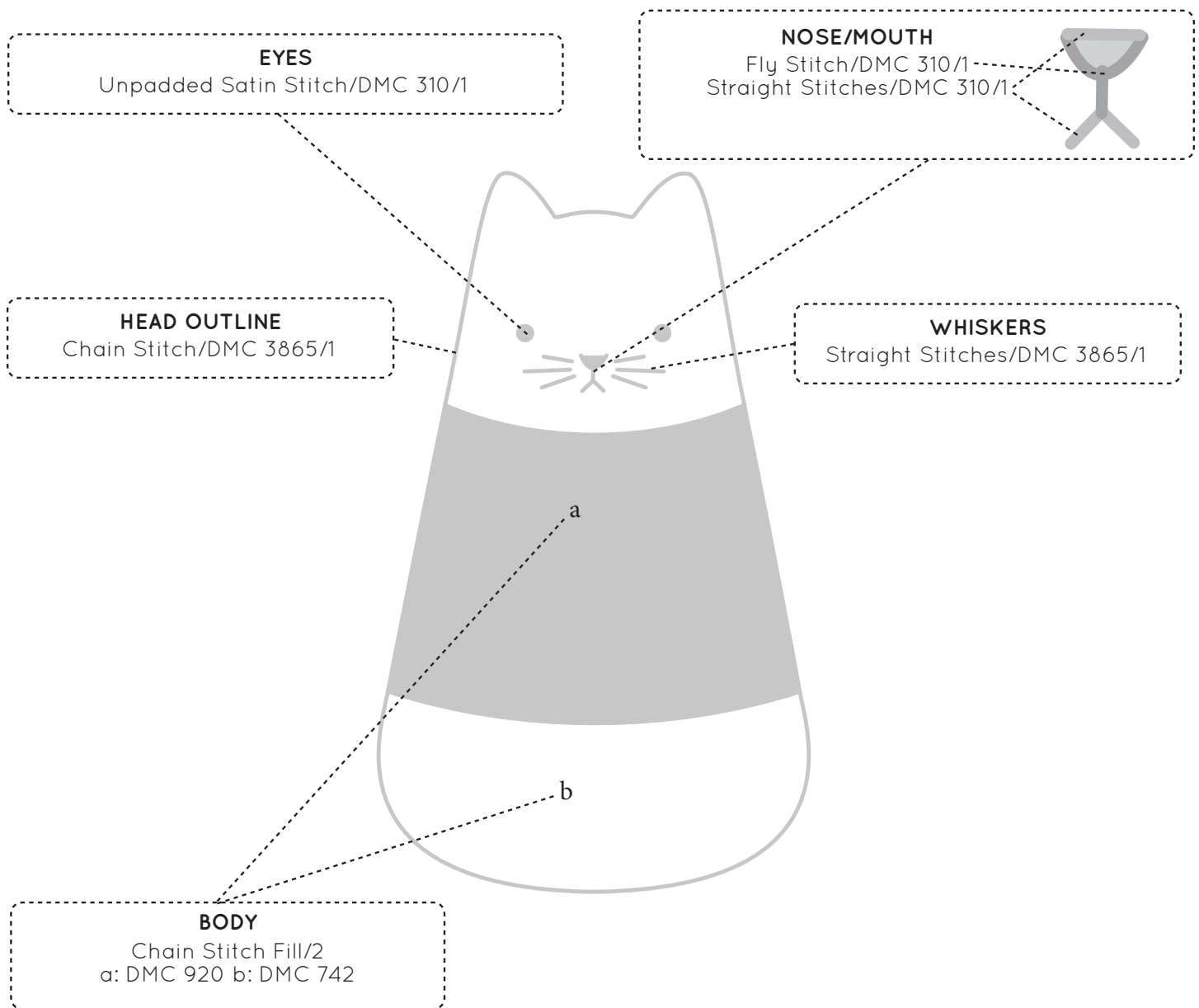
Yellow-Green: DMC 165

Black: DMC 310

Sampler Club Bonus Print!

If you are part of the [Sampler Club](#) you will have received this screen printed pattern along with the Sugar Skull Sampler.

Any stitches not found on this instruction guide can be found in the [Stitch Library](#)



Bonus Floss: DMC 920 = Orange | DMC 3865 = White

PUTTING THE DOLL TOGETHER



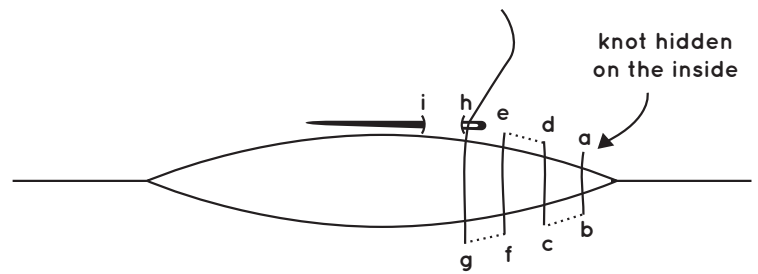
1) After you finish embroidering Candy Corn Cat & Cotton Candy Cat, sandwich the two together, right-side to right side. Cotton Candy Cat is larger to make it easier to center. Put the pieces back into the hoop before stitching, or else use pins to hold together so the pieces don't move around once lined up.

2) Use a backstitch to sew along the pattern, using the General Outline on Candy Corn Cat as your guide. Optional: make 2 separate cats by using your own fabric as the backing piece, and sew around Cotton Candy Cat with a 1/8" seam allowance. Leave a small gap on one side for turning and stuffing.

3) Cut around the shape, clipping between the ears and notching all around.

4) Use a sturdy straw and something thinner (like a paintbrush handle) to help turn the doll right-side out

5) Stuff the doll. Sew closed using a ladder stitch.



Ladder Stitch

