

# *Thread, White, and Blue*

*With instructions for beginning Cross Stitch*



*a cross stitch pattern by*

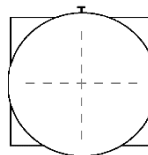


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## Instructions for Beginning Cross Stitch

### Prepare Your Fabric

☒ Use the recommended fabric in size and color indicated on chart. The count of a fabric is the number of holes per inch which tells you how many stitches will cover an inch. 14 count Aida is the most common (14 stitches per inch). Fold your piece of fabric twice to find the center. Use a hoop or frame to keep fabric smooth and tight. You will begin stitching as close to the center as you can. The center of the chart is usually marked with arrows.



### Thread Your Needle

Cross stitch is usually done with tapestry needle in size 24 and two strands of embroidery floss which comes in plies of six strands.

☒ Cut a length about 14 inches long. Separate one strand, pull it up gently while pinching the rest of the strands and pulling them down. Separate another strand and line it up with the first strand. This gives you two strands to stitch with. Thread both strands through needle eye and pull a few inches through.

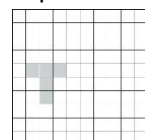
☒ You can also use the **Loop Method** to start. Cut longer lengths (about 18-24 inches) and separate one strand of thread. Fold this thread in half, forming a loop at one end. Insert loop into needle eye and pull, leaving a 2-3 inch tail.

☒ Do not knot the thread as you do for hand sewing.

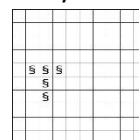
### Patterns and Charts

Cross stitch patterns, or charts, use a grid with colored blocks or symbols to represent stitches. One colored block or symbol represents one stitch.

Fabric holes are indicated on the chart by crossed lines. Four holes make a square, or block, which you will fill with one whole cross stitch. One cross stitch covers one block of thread on the fabric. Pattern instructions that tell you to “stitch over two threads” mean you should count two threads of the fabric (horizontal and vertical) to form the block you will cover with the stitch. Lines on the pattern indicate backstitch (BS) and dots indicate French knots (FK).

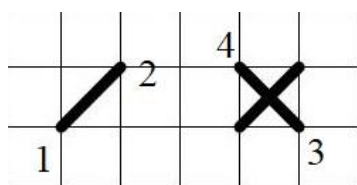


Colored blocks



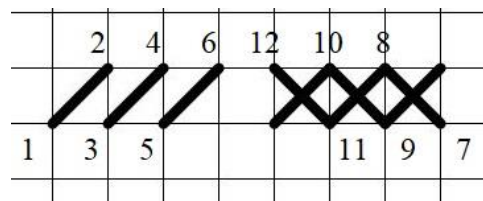
Symbols

### How To Cross Stitch



Come up from the back at 1. Go down at 2.  
Come up at 3. Go down at 4.

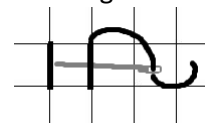
*Cross stitches are made by forming X's, or crosses, over the blocks of thread on the fabric. You will push and pull your threaded needle through the fabric holes, coming up or going down to form the X's.*



A row of stitches can be done one arm at a time, then crossing back over each arm to complete the X.

### Secure the First and Last Stitch

☒ After coming up (1) and going down (2), secure the thread on the back of the fabric while coming back up again (3). Flip your work over so you can see the back. Your thread should form a loop that you can insert the needle through before bringing it through the fabric hole to come to the front again (3). For **Loop Method**, secure thread at (2). ☒ Continue making stitches, following the chart and counting carefully. ☒ End a thread on the back of your work by taking it through the back of a few stitches, then snip off with embroidery scissors.

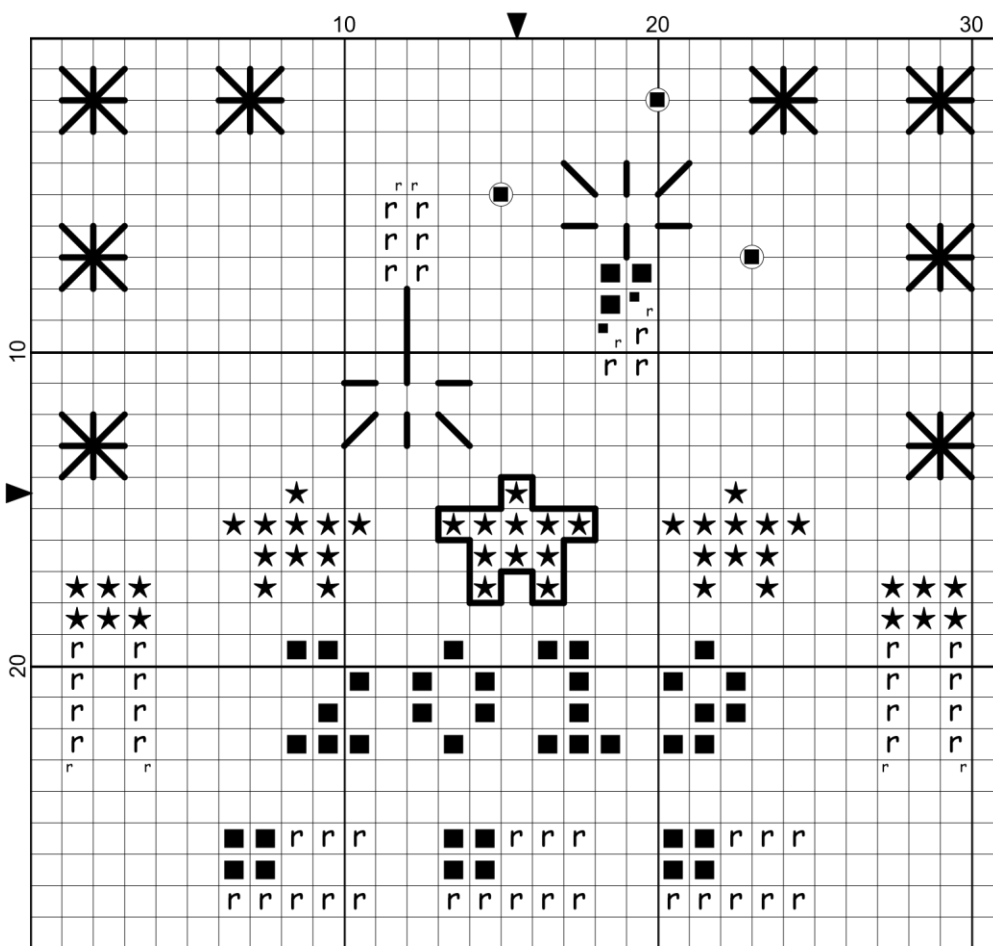


### Tips

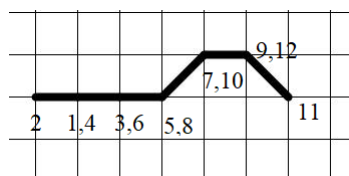
☒ Each stitch should be uniform, with the top arm of the X laying in the same direction for all stitches. Work stitches across and down to avoid “busy” holes, X's with arms pointing upwards, and “un-stitching.” Stitches should not be too tight or too loose.

☒ Let your needle dangle after every few stitches to keep the thread from getting twisted.

☒ It is a good idea to highlight the chart as you stitch to help keep track of what you have stitched.



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### Backstitch

Backstitch (BS) is done after whole stitches are finished. Use one strand of thread for backstitching unless otherwise noted.

Backstitching provides a clean outline and detailing. Do not pull these stitches too tightly.

Come up at 1, back to 2, etc. You can secure your thread at 3 and continue back to 4, working in this way and following the chart.

### French Knots

French knots are used for lettering, eyes, flowers, and texture and can be worked in one or more strands. They are also known as Colonial Knots.

1. Come up from the back. Pinch the thread coming out of the fabric with your free hand, about an inch up. Place the needle horizontally behind this thread and pull it over the needle. Hold it in place on the needle with your index finger (of your dominant hand) while continuing to pull it over then under the needle so you see a **U**. Pinch the **U** with your free hand and wrap it around the needle twice, sliding it under the index finger.
  2. Insert the needle going down near where you started (do not go down the same hole), still holding the thread (**U**) with your other hand, firmly.
  3. Push the needle through about halfway, then pull it all the way through from the back (with your dominant hand) while letting go of the thread with your other hand. Do not pull too tightly. A knot will form on top of the fabric.
- French knots are easier to do when using thread that has already made stitches and is not too long.

### Smyrna Cross

The Smyrna cross is a specialty stitch worked as a cross stitch (1-2, 3-4) with an upright cross stitch (5-6, 7-8) over it. Specialty stitches such as this one should be worked one at a time in the same order for each individual stitch.

### Legend:

- DMC-321 christmas red
- ★ DMC-809 delft blue
- DMC-820 royal blue - vy dk

### Backstitches:

- DMC-820 royal blue - vy dk

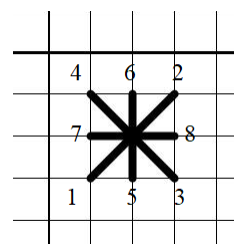
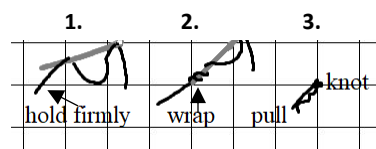
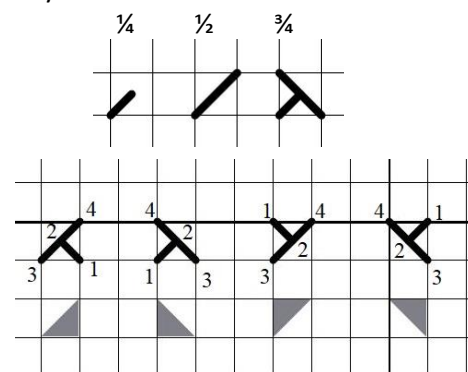
### French Knots:

- DMC-820 royal blue - vy dk

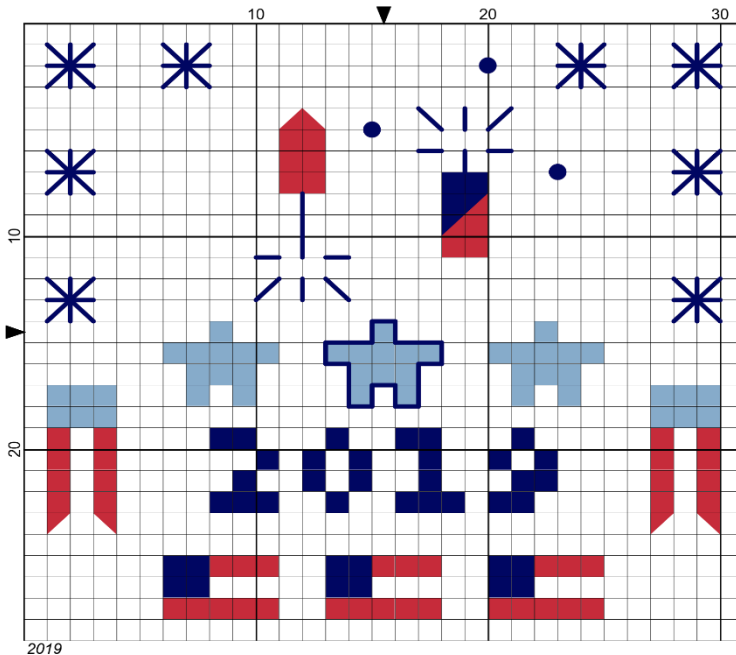
(Instructions for Beginning Cross Stitch continued)

### Fractionals

Fractional stitches are only partially completed. They appear as smaller symbols on the chart. The most common are  $\frac{1}{4}$  stitches. When stitching on aida, you will have to pierce the fabric with your needle to make  $\frac{1}{4}$  stitches.



## Thread, White, and Blue by The Count of Many Stitches



Legend:  
 ■ DMC-321 christmas red  
 ■ DMC-809 delft blue  
 ■ DMC-820 royal blue - vy dk  
 Backstitches:  
 — DMC-820 royal blue - vy dk  
 French Knots:  
 ● DMC-820 royal blue - vy dk

Fabric: 14 count white aida  
 Size: approx. 2 x 2 inches  
 Cross stitch in two strands.  
 Backstitch in one strand.  
 Smyrna cross over two blocks.

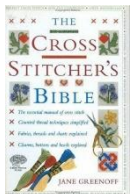
### About the Pattern

This pattern was designed especially for beginners. The motifs and colors are intentionally placed to make carrying thread and counting blocks easier. Follow the guide below when working this pattern.

### Stitching Guide

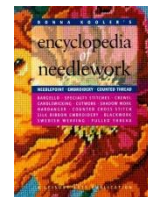
1. Begin stitching at center. Find the center of a chart using the arrows (►▼).
2. The top of the middle star is the center of this design. Work a single cross stitch, then drop to the next row and work five stitches. This is a good place to practice stitching one arm at a time, then crossing back. Finish the star.
3. Carry the thread on the back of your work and begin stitching the star on the right. Complete star, then carry thread to top of right banner. Count blocks carefully.
4. Start a new thread and stitch the rest of the light blue color working the left star first, then the left banner top.
5. Start a new thread in dark blue, begin stitching the numbers, starting with "2" and using the already-stitched stars as guides.
6. Start a new thread, stitch the dark blue fields of the three flags on the bottom using the already-stitched numbers as guides.
7. Start a new thread in red and work the left banner stripes one column at a time. Pay attention to fractionals.
8. Carry the thread on the back of your work to the bottom left flag and stitch red stripes in rows.
9. Start new threads as needed and stitch the rest of the red stripes on the flags and right banner.
10. Begin backstitching with a single strand of dark blue by outlining the middle star.
11. Continue backstitching to left firecracker, using the tips of the stars as guides.
12. Start a new thread in red and work the firecrackers, using the backstitches as guides. You may want to turn your work upside down, as well as your chart, and begin stitching the firecrackers at their bottoms—your stitches will still lay correctly.
13. Finish the right firecracker with two strands of dark blue.
14. Backstitch in one strand of dark blue: remaining firecracker stitches, then French knots and Smyrna crosses (see page 3).
15. Finish your cross stitch project as a small pillow, greeting card, or in a small frame.

### Recommended Reading



*The Cross Stitcher's Bible* by Jane Greenoff.  
 Newton Abbot, England: David & Charles, 2000. 192 pp

*Donna Kooler's Encyclopedia of Needlework* by Donna Kooler.  
 Little Rock Ark.: Leisure Arts, 2000. 320 pp



**Suggested Sites** [www.yarntree.com](http://www.yarntree.com) [www.needlenthread.com](http://www.needlenthread.com)