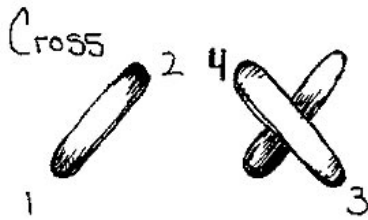


# cross-stitching for not-big folks

"If you never did you should. These things are fun and fun is good."

Dr. Seuss

Cross-stitching is a kind of stitching that uses X's, which look like crosses, to make patterns and shapes on special fabric. Since each X fills a square, the kind of fabric you use has boxes on it. That fabric is called Aida fabric, and the best one to use is Aida 14 (the 14 is the magic number that tells you how close or far apart the boxes might be).



To make your crosses, you thread your needle and "cross" a box. You will use a needle and this mystical stuff called embroidery floss.

Embroidery floss is just another word for colored string which comes in little packets. Maybe they call it "floss" because some people used it floss their teeth, but they definitely called it "embroidery" because people use it for embroidery as well as cross stitching.

On to the needle- you will use a special needle with a blunt point and a large eye. Yes, needles have eyes- and you thread a needle through it's eye.

## Supplies for starting your first masterpiece

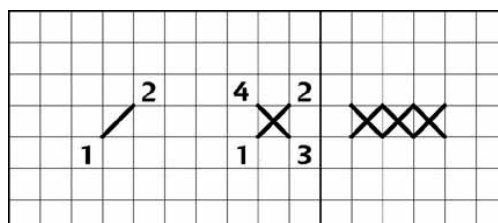
- A piece of Aida 14 fabric
- Four different colors of embroidery floss
- An plastic embroidery hoop helps hold fabric while you stitch
- A tapestry needle size 24
- A pattern or design (we dig the Anchor 1st Kit at the end of this guide)

In case anyone inquires, you are busy doing "counted cross stitch". Counted cross stitch is the method in which you transfer a design from a printed graph your aida fabric. You just use embroidery floss to place X's on the fabric corresponding to symbols on the chart. Each symbol on the chart represents one X on the fabric. The different styles of symbols on the chart represent different colors of floss.

"It is better to know how to learn than to know."

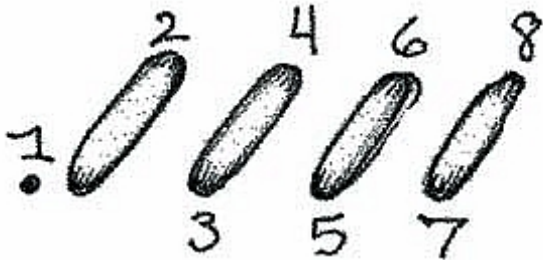
- Dr. Seuss

## Start stitching- Make your first cross



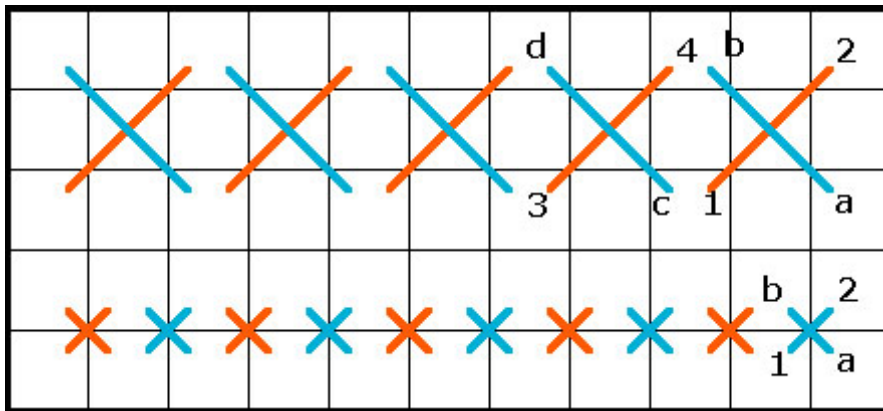
# cross-stitching for not-big folks

This is how you make a cross on your Aida fabric. Notice that the square is the center and your thread goes outside the corners of the square.



There are two ways, or methods, to cross stitch. The first method is to work a row of half stitches (////), then work back (\\\\) to complete the X's. Use this method for most stitching.

The second method is to complete each X as you go. Max started out using this method until he got the hang of making crosses. This method is used most often for vertical rows- the ones that go up and down rather than across your fabric- of stitches.



You can vary the size of the crosses if you get comfortable with the stitching process. The regular cross stitch goes across an entire square. To make a smaller cross stitch, just go across a point where four lines meet, like you see on the bottom row in this picture.

Keep your x's crossed in the same direction- it doesn't really matter which *way* they slant, but if they are mixed and go in different directions, the finished piece will look uneven. On that note, if the finished piece looks uneven, it might look pretty neat.

Relax as you stitch. Your stitches should lay flat on your fabric and you should pull them through slowly and consciously. Try a few crosses on your aida fabric and then you'll be ready to work on your first sampler.

## Start your sampler- Make your first heart

Take a good look at the hearts in the first row of the sampler on page 4 of this guide. Choose the right color embroidery floss as seen in the key to right of the pattern. Thread your needle with the floss and you're ready to start.

Find the center of the pattern. Next, find the center of your fabric. An easy way to do this is to fold the fabric in half vertically and "pinch" with your finger to make a small crease. Open the fabric, fold in half horizontally and make another "pinch". Open the fabric up. The two creases will mark the center of the fabric.

# cross-stitching for not-big folks

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Most stitchers like to start stitching close to the center of the design. For a heart design as seen on sampler, start in the center of the heart. You can also start with one of the flower designs- Max liked to start simple so he didn't get too overwhelmed. It's your call.

Knots on the back will show through, so do not use any knots to start or end. To begin stitching, bring the threaded needle up from the back of the fabric leaving about a 1" tail of thread behind the fabric. Stitch the next 5 or 6 stitches over the tail. Clip off extra thread.

To end off, weave your needle back through the last 5 or 6 stitches and clip the thread short so as not to leave a loose tail.

## Max's Tips suggestions from a 9-year-old boy who likes to cross-stitch

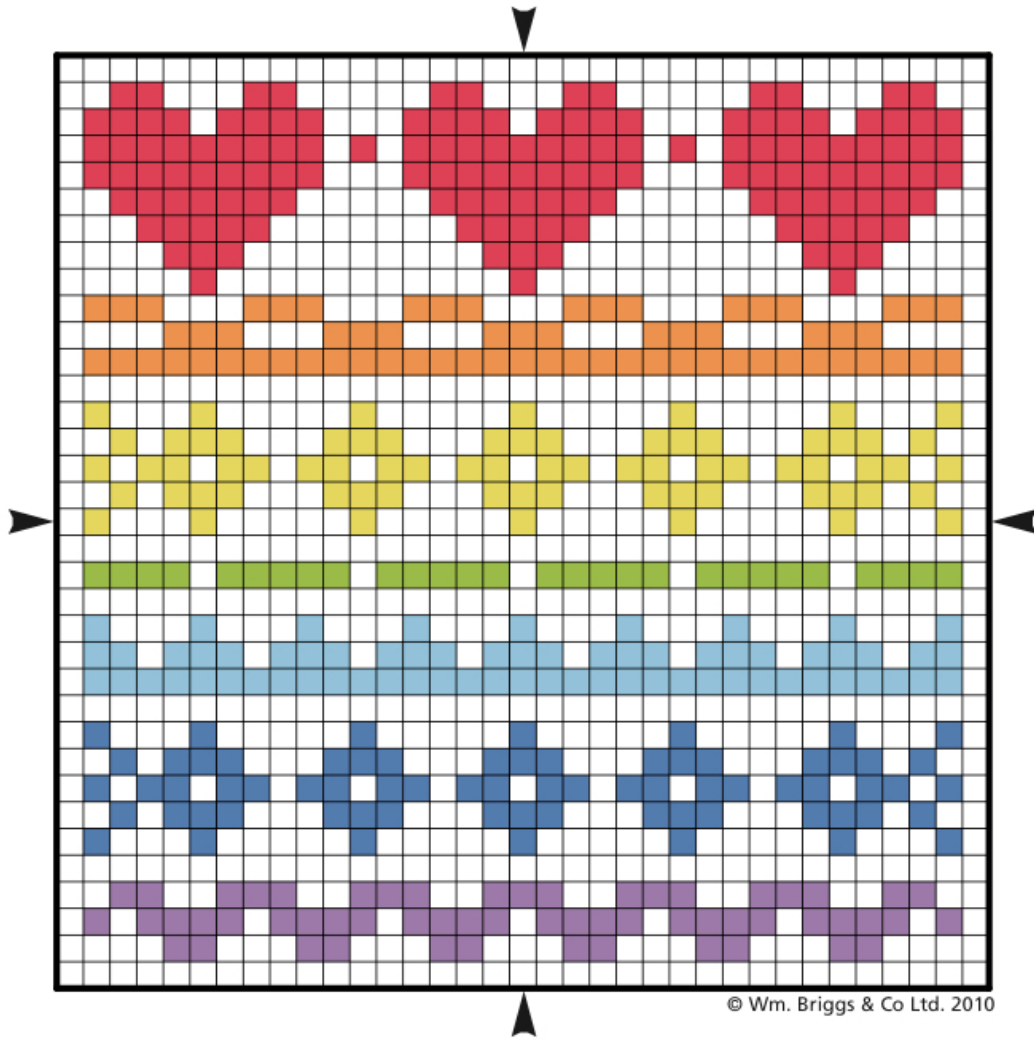
1. Pull slow- especially with a long thread- because if you pull fast, it has a tendency to knot.
2. Look closely at the holes because you don't want to make a mistake and then have to pull it out and start again. You have to take your time.
3. Don't poke yourself with the needle. If you do, it won't hurt bad though because tapestry needles are pretty blunt.
4. If you mess up, just pull the mistake out through the back, cut the thread, knot it, rethread your needle, and start again. It feels good to be able to erase mistakes like that.
5. Listen to music while you stitch.
6. Don't give up if you get confused. You can always change the design a little to hide your mistakes. But mistakes can be pretty too.

# *cross-stitching for not-big folks*

## Anchor 1<sup>st</sup> Kit

You will need  
Anchor Soft Cotton

Shade	Mtrs
46	1
97	0.5
129	0.5
147	0.5
255	0.5
290	0.5
314	0.5



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## RAINBOW STITCHES