

Stitch Club Detroit

Instructions for needlepointing a Detroit Institute of Arts canvas

Stitch Club Detroit is a free meet up group with events throughout Southeast Michigan including Grosse Pointe, Ann Arbor and our monthly meetup at Kresge Court (10-12 on the last Saturday of the month). All stitchers and needlework is welcome including needlepoint, cross stitch, embroidery, knitting, crochet, and more! To join, follow us on Instagram for information on our schedule, or email stitchclubdetroit@gmail.com to get on our mailing list.

Many of our members needlepoint, so we developed a pattern and instructions for you to explore needlepoint, too. This pattern can also be adapted for cross stitch or other art forms.

Getting Started with Needlepoint: A Timeless Craft

Needlepoint has been a beloved art form for centuries, blending creativity with craftsmanship to produce stunning stitched designs. As part of the Detroit Institute of Art's *Painted with Silk* exhibit, **Stitch Club Detroit** invites you to start your own needlepoint journey, whether you're drawn to its rich history or looking for a relaxing new hobby.

Needlepoint is considered part of the needlework family, which also includes hand embroidery, cross stitch, knitting, crochet, crewel work, quilting, and more.

What You Need to Start

Beginning needlepoint is easier than you might think. Fundamentally, you need canvas, a needle, thread, and scissors. You can find these materials at a specialty needlepoint shop.

- **18 or 13 mesh canvas** – Canvas is measured by mesh size, which refers to the number of holes per inch. (18 mesh is 18 canvas threads per intersection, 13 mesh is 13 canvas threads per intersection). Canvases can be purchased with a painted or printed design already on them, or you can chart a design (like the one in this guide).
- **Thread** - The type of thread you choose affects the texture and appearance of your piece. You can use wool, cotton, silk, or speciality threads like metallics. For beginners, we recommend starting with DMC Pearle Cotton for its affordability and ease.
 - 18 mesh canvas: DMC Pearle Cotton 5
 - 13 mesh canvas: DMC Pearle Cotton 3
- **Needles** – Tapestry needles are best for needlepoint because they have a blunt tip that glides through the canvas without snagging
 - 18 mesh canvas: Size 22 tapestry needle
 - 13 mesh canvas: Size 20 tapestry needle
- **Scissors** – Small, sharp embroidery scissors make cutting threads easy and precise

Starting Your Canvas & Anchoring Your Thread

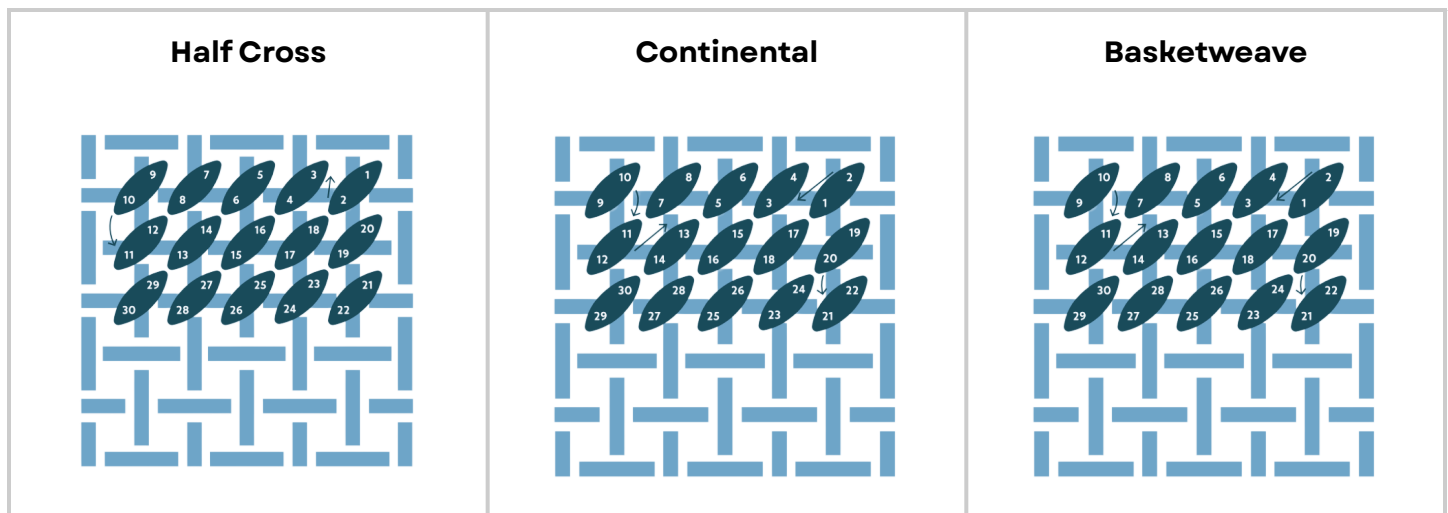
Before you begin stitching, you'll need to prepare your canvas and secure your thread outside of the area you will be working.

Waste Knot Method

- Tie a small knot at the end of your thread and place it on the top side of the canvas, a few stitches away from your starting point vertically or horizontally.
- Stitch over the tail of the thread on the back side of the canvas, securing it in place.
- Once secure, snip off the waste knot.

Basic Stitches for Beginners

The most common stitch in needlepoint is the tent stitch, which crosses a canvas intersection diagonally and creates smooth, even coverage. Here are three types of tent stitches.



Reading the Chart

Locate the center of the chart and the center of your canvas. With your needle threaded and a knot at the end, take your first stitch. Then, counting the proper number of cells according to the chart, continue.

We recommend stitching the DIA logo first, and then moving onto the blue background. It results in less counting and it's easier to remove if you make a mistake.

Mistakes happen

If you make a mistake, just remove the needle from your thread and back your stitches out, using the end of your needle to gently pull them away from the front of the canvas. If you need to remove a whole section, carefully snip your stitches out and begin again.

Enjoy the process! Needlepoint is meant to be meditative and enjoyable.

When you're done stitching

Your project can be framed, turned into an ornament or a bag charm, or even as a patch for a tote bag or hat.

If you need assistance, we hope you come join us at one of our future meetups at DIA.

