

Embroidery design

Are you a needle crafts buff? Embroidery is, arguably, one of the most refined of the needle crafts. The very fine thread allows for detailed designs which are almost like paintings. Variations in the number of threads and length of stitches, along with raised work and knots can form intriguing, beautiful effects. Perhaps the most satisfying aspect of this craft is the embroidery design. There is no reason to stick to purchased designs. If you embroider, or would like to learn, you probably have a good eye for color and composition as well as a fair amount of patience. You've got the artistic flair, so just take the artistic license and create your own embroidery design. Let's look at a few pointers and ideas.

Toss around some ideas for designs that appeal to you. If you aren't feeling inspired, go online or visit your library for pictures of embroidery pieces as well as tapestries. Examine the elements of the picture which produce certain effects that catch your eye. See how the ornate borders of 17th century tapestries might be adapted to a small picture frame design. Look at various techniques for coloring a flower that looks three dimensional.

Landscapes, florals and geometrics are good choices for a beginning designer. Keep your embroidery design on the small side for starters. It's common for beginners to bite off more than they can finish before frustration over spoiled stitches or undesirable effects sets in and the project is dropped. An embroidery design of 4 inches by 6 inches will deliver plenty of knowledge and beauty to build on your next design.

If this is your first embroidery design, a sampler of stitches is another good choice. A sampler serves two purposes. First, you get a chance to perfect your stitches and compare effects of different stitches side by side. Second, you can fool around with color combinations and effects of metallic threads in your compositions.

When you've got an idea you like, use a ruler to mark the finished size on your sketchpad. Use pencil (so you can erase) to sketch your embroidery design. Use light strokes until everything's just the way you like it. Use colored pencils to fill in your design. If you have a rose or other element with shading in your design, be sure to use different shades for the three-dimensional effect.

Next, use transfer paper or a transfer pen to trace the design onto your linen. Use masking tape to tape both linen and paper firmly in place until your transfer is complete.

Use good linen for superior results. The high thread count of quality linen

allows for precise placement of stitches and will block well.

Now the fun begins! Get your hoop, threads and needles out and begin your masterpiece. Creating your own embroidery design is a satisfying hobby that can last a lifetime. You just keep getting better!