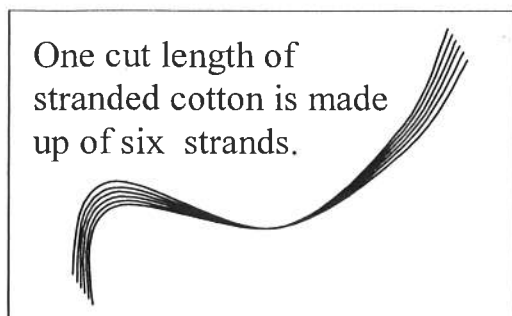


not working on the piece. The Aida has been folded into quarters, which enables you to find the centre of the fabric. Please make sure you use the Aida with the longer sides along the top and bottom. You can start in the centre, or count out from the centre, if you want to start off in another area.



The cross stitch is worked in one strand of stranded cotton folded double.

The back stitch is worked in one strand.

Working cross stitch with one strand folded double

The easiest and neatest way of anchoring the thread for cross stitch is the loop method, as described here. Pull out one of the six strands from the cut length of stranded cotton, fold it in half and thread the two cut ends through the needle. Bring the needle up from the back of the fabric, through the hole that you want to use. Pull the thread through to within about an inch of the loop. Make the first diagonal of your stitch, taking the needle down through the hole and through the thread loop. Pull gently to anchor and continue. As you stitch, a neater effect is achieved by taking the needle through from front to back or from back to front, in two separate movements. If you want to work a new area of the same colour, it is best to weave the thread through an occasional stitch on the back. Beware of doing this too much with dark colours because it may show through. To finish off, run the thread through a few of the stitches on the back of the design.

Working back stitch and French knots

When you have worked the cross stitch, use the complete stitch diagram to show you where to add the back stitch and French knots. Use one strand of black stranded cotton. When working horizontal or vertical lines of back stitch on this design, you can either make individual stitches or fewer longer ones. It is a modern design so I prefer longer stitches, this also has the advantage of being quicker and showing up better. With the longer angled stitches the trick is to look for where they touch the intersections on the grid. Make the stitch from one of these intersections to the next.

Adding the embellishments

If you want to wash and iron the picture, then do that first (see below). Use the thin needle, threaded with one strand of white (for snowflakes and silver stars), yellow (for gold stars on wreath) or red (for beads on wreath), to attach the embellishments. You can follow the picture on the front of the kit or do your own thing! The position of the beads is shown by a 'b' on the complete stitch diagram. To attach the beads, first secure the thread on the back of the piece. Come to the front, go through the bead, and take the needle through to the back again. For the sequins, make two stitches from between points of the stars into the centre or for the snowflakes make three stitches.

The Last Stitch

Check the back of your work for any loose ends. They can be darned in or trimmed. If your picture has become dirty it can be washed by hand in luke-warm water using a delicates hand wash. Rinse thoroughly in cold water. To iron, press on the reverse side onto a towel.

Helpline

We do hope that you enjoy working this kit and are pleased with your picture. If you have any problems at all please do not hesitate to contact us on 0844 8000221 or info@bothythreads.com and ask for Kate! As a small business we value your opinion, and ask you to return the short questionnaire, to help us to improve both the quality of our kits and service.