

CGNA Learn-a-Stitch

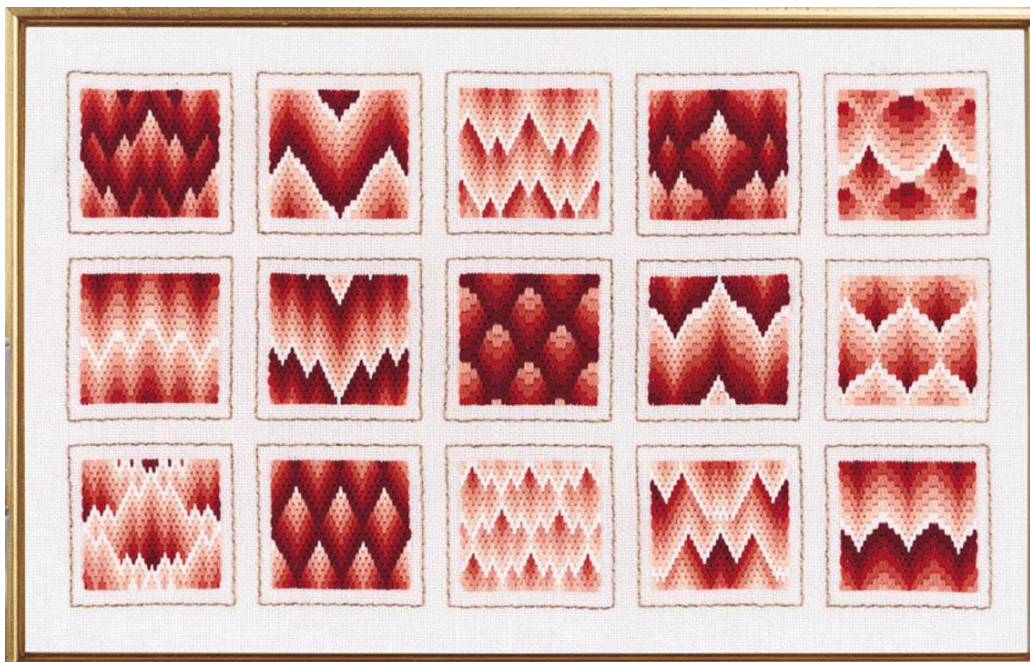
October 19, 2020



Florentine Work Bargello Hungarian Point

Bargello is a type of needlepoint embroidery consisting of upright flat stitches laid in a mathematical pattern to create motifs. The name originates from a series of chairs found in the Bargello palace in Florence, which have a "flame stitch" pattern. The stitch is reputed to have been devised by Elizabeth of Hungary who was born in 1207, the daughter of the King of Hungary.

Traditionally, Bargello was stitched in wool on canvas. Embroidery done this way is remarkably durable. It is well suited for use on pillows, upholstery and even carpets, but not for clothing. In most traditional pieces, all stitches are vertical with stitches going over two or more threads.

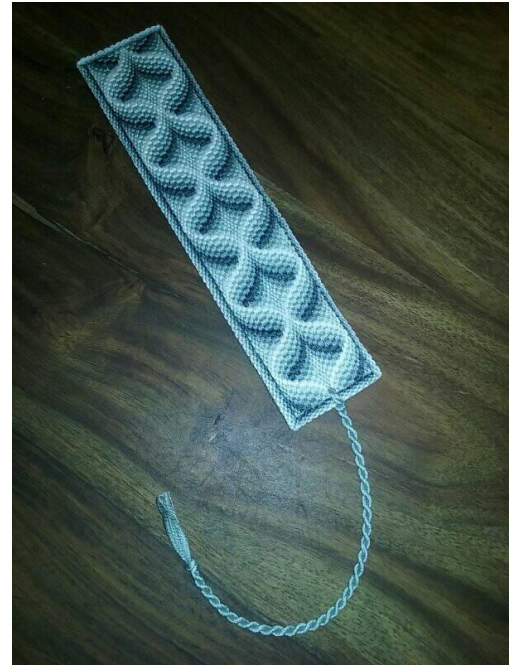


This bargello sampler is one of Mary Hickmott's patterns. This sampler was done on 22 count hardanger cloth with embroidery floss.

Traditional designs are very colourful, but you may use many hues of one colour, which produces intricate shading effects. It can give it a 3D look.

The patterns are naturally geometric. Bargello requires very precise counting of squares for the mathematical pattern connected with the various motifs to accurately execute designs.

Example by Jane Gray



A number of alternative names are used including:

- **Florentine work** - After the fact that the Bargello Museum is in Florence.
- **Hungarian point** (*punto unghero*) - In Italian, Bargello is known as "Hungarian Point" indicating that the Florentines believed the technique originated in Hungary.
- **Flame stitch** (*punto fiamma*) - A type of Bargello motif in which zig-zag or flames are created. The chairs in the Bargello museum do use flame stitch motifs, but curved motifs are also common. These curved Bargello motifs would normally **not** be "flame stitch", but would be called *Bargello*.

The patterns can be incorporated into pillows, rugs, table runners, purses, bags, glass case, or a bookmark. You can use it in one colour to add interest to the background texture of piece of work.

Technique

Bargello refers not to just a stitching technique, but also to motifs created by the change of colors in the stitches. This section describes the vertical stitch, and how it is combined with color and "stepping" to create different motifs.

Vertical stitches

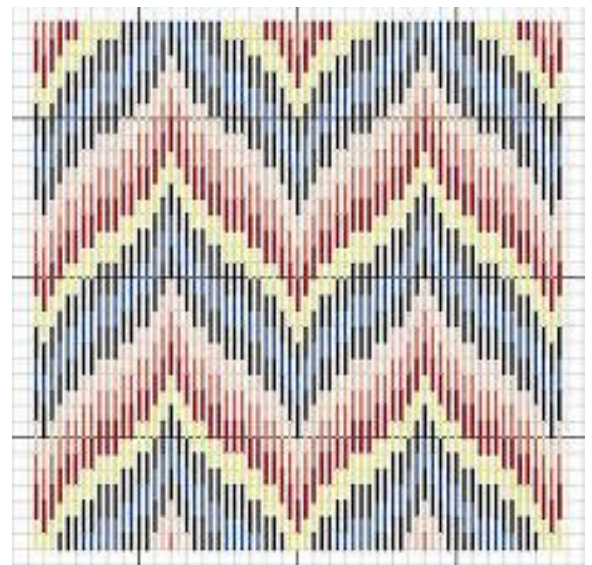
Traditional Bargello pieces incorporate a series of all vertical stitches. The basic unit is usually a vertical stitch of four threads, but other heights are possible.

Some Bargello pieces use only one height of stitch (over four threads) but you can combine different heights of stitches. (over 2 threads or 6 depending on the effect or design you want))

Stepping

Bargello patterns are formed when vertical stitches are **stepped** or offset vertically, usually by two threads (i.e., halfway down a unit of four threads). The patterns in the steps combined with color changes determines how the overall pattern will emerge.

You can see from this example that not all the stitches are the same length and that in some cases several stitches are done before “stepping” down.



Flame (sharp)

If vertical stitches are stepped down quickly, the design forms sharp points or zig-zags. This type of Bargello motif is often known as "flame stitch".



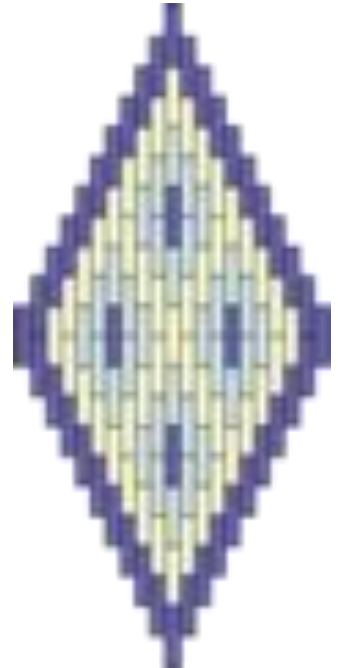
If steps are gradual, then the design will appear to be curved. Traditional curved Bargello motifs include medallions and ribbons.

Example of a flame stitch motif. Image created and licensed by Elizabeth Pyatt.

Diamonds (sharp)

Stitches step sharply across the designs and color changes cause diamonds to appear.

Example of diamond motif formed with Bargello stitches. Image created and licensed by Elizabeth Pyatt.



Medallions (curved)



Stitches are gradually stepped and color changes cause spheres or medallions to appear.

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Example Bargello Medallion design. Image created and licensed by Elizabeth Pyatt.



You can see in this example that the background is done with two thread step.

The motif in this pillow is also over two threads and everything is done vertically.



The border around this pillow is an example of a sharp step. It was also done over two threads.

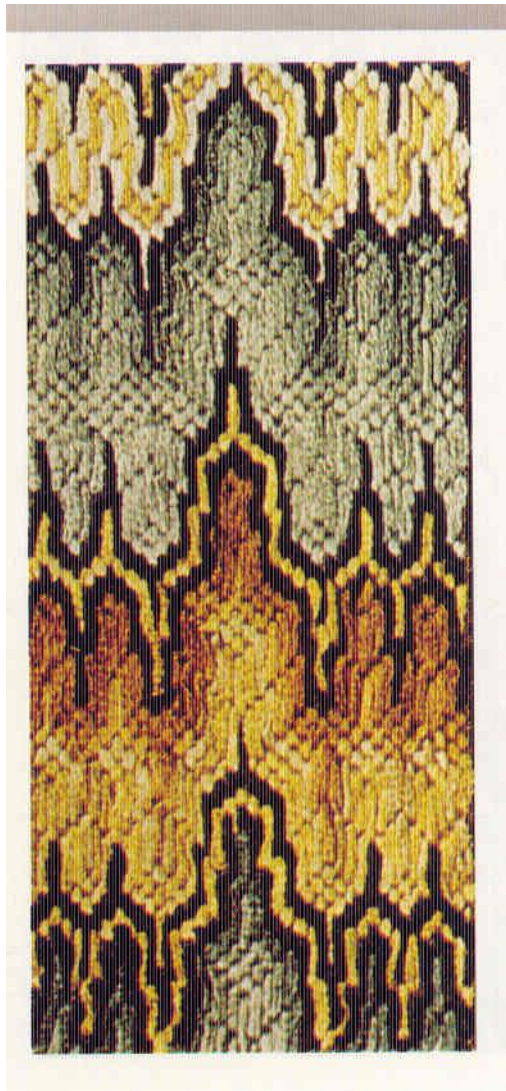
I used tapestry wool to make up this pillow.



This pillow shows a different motif added to the pillow .



Other
examples of
pillows you
could make.



For the more adventurous, this example of flame shows varying lengths of the step to create a very unique pattern.

Where to start:

1. I suggest you start with grid paper and coloured pencils to map out your pattern.
2. You will need canvas and tapestry needle. Floss or wool or silk threads depending on your project and the size of your canvas.

Projects you might want to try:

Supplies:

22 count hardanger fabric or similar fabric

Embroidery floss

- four shades of one colour from dark to light (i.e. dark turquoise, deep turquoise, turquoise and light turquoise).
- White
- Two shades of a contrasting colour (i.e. grey mauve and light grey mauve)

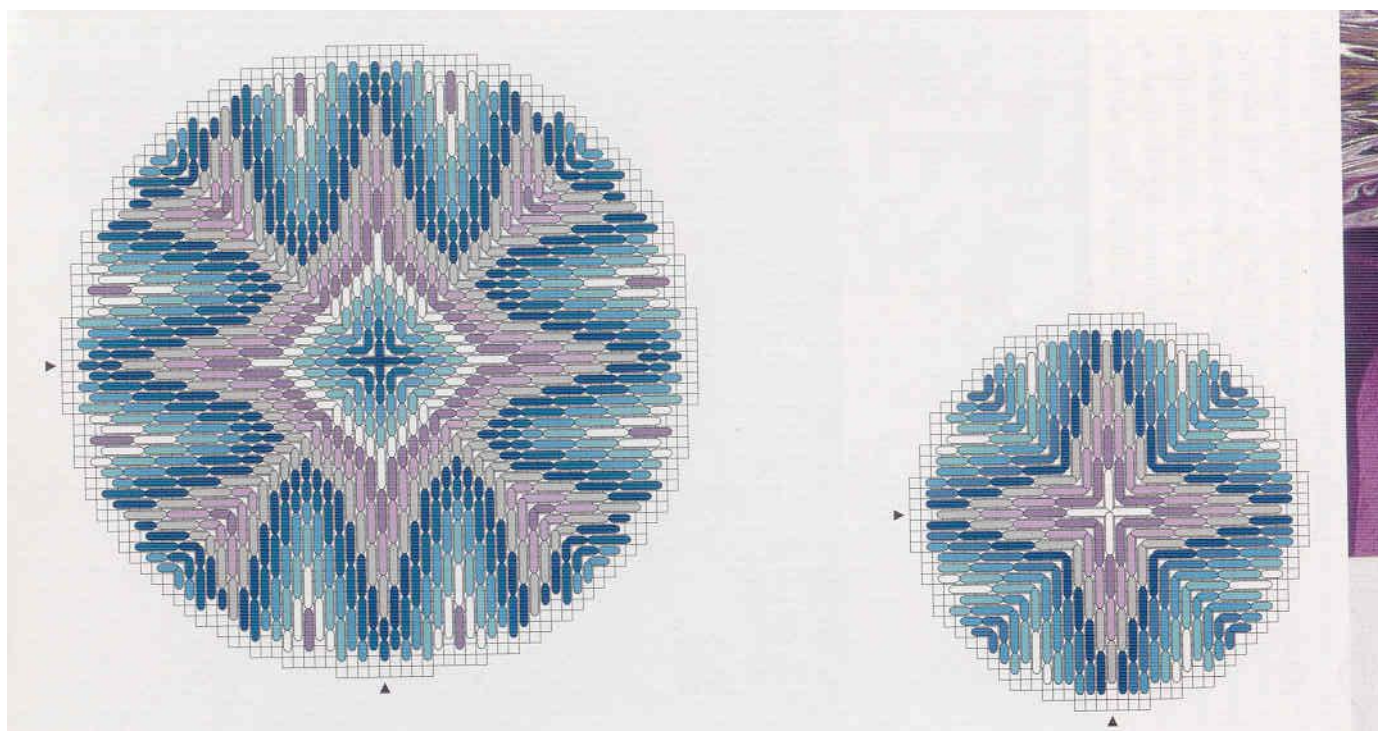
Tapestry needle size 22



For bookmark you will need a piece fabric 10 inches by 5 inches



For a trinket pot you will need a piece of fabric 7 inches square
 For pendant you will need a piece of fabric 5 inches square



These patterns and designs are from Mary Hickmott's *New Stitches* Jun 2004

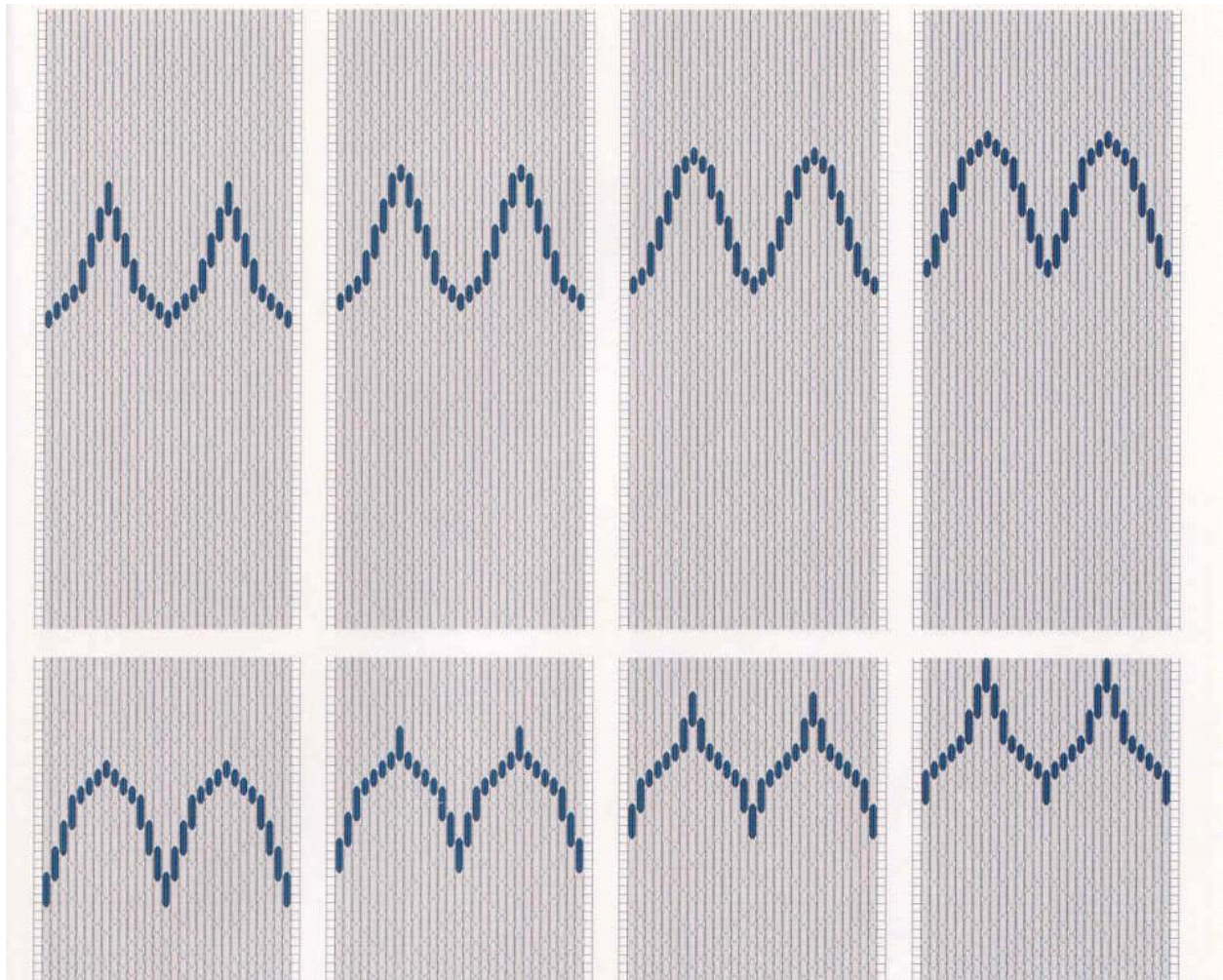
Just in time for Christmas these cute stockings would be great for gift cards, place settings or ornaments for your tree.

Pattern and design from *Cross-Stitch & Needlework* January 2007



Supplies: 8" X 11" 24 count for finished size of 4 1/2 X 6 inches

Whichever project you decide to do you always start in the middle and work one side to the edge and then go back and to the other side identically. Here are eight examples of starting points that will give you some idea of pattern you might like to use.



Sorry to be so long winded, but it would have been so much easier to show you in person with samples. Have fun. Once you get started on your project it is an easy. If you have any questions please call me. I don't get on the computer every day so better to catch me by phone.

Check out these websites for more ideas

<https://www.livemaster.com/topic/2965127-bargello-are-you-sure-this-is-the-florentine-embroidery-part-one>

<https://www.livemaster.com/topic/2724883-florentine-bargello-embroidery-25-patterns-for-different-difficulty-levels>

<https://www.needlework-tips-and-techniques.com/bargello.html>

<https://www.pinterest.ca/pin/460774605604036732/>

Mary Hickmott Bargello designs

Unfortunately the two specific books our library has on Bargello/Florentine stitching are in the library cabinet at the church. I'm sure there are books in your personal collection that will show you examples of this technique.

Create, go for it! Life's too short to repeat the work of others — create your own! And it doesn't matter how it's called — Hungarian embroidery, Bargello, or Florentine embroidery... that's not so important.