

## INTERLACED STITCH

*Ever since I began teaching myself Hardanger, I have been fascinated by the huge variety of filling and border stitches available around the world! If you Google Spanish and Italian needlework, such as PUNTO ANTICO, or RETICELLA EMBROIDERY, you'll find lacey and exotic stitches, such as these interwoven samples:*



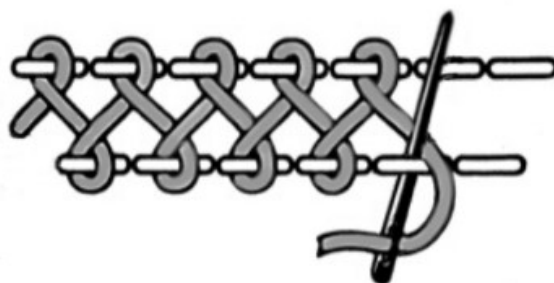
*Some of them are shown partially finished, giving you an idea of how they were created, and I've had fun trying to recreate (or deconstruct) some of them! It was while I was researching these fascinating stitches that I came across a neat variation on a stitch I have long been familiar with.*

*So today I want to look at INTERLACED STITCHES, starting from basic and simple, and moving on to more intricate work. Every culture seems to have their own version of INTERLACING, which is defined by the Textile Research Centre (TRC) as "... a group of stitches in which there is a line of "foundation" stitches, and a second thread (and sometimes a third one)... interlaced through the foundation stitches, ..."*

*Celtic knots would be one example ... though the Celts did not invent interlacing - in fact, this type of stitch has been around since the 6th or 7th century! However, this style of interwoven knot has become closely identified with Celtic culture today.*

*I found samples of interlacing variations in Moorish; Islamic; Spanish and Italian work, making it truly an international stitch!*

*Interlacing can be as simple as weaving through a separated width of running stitches, **WITHOUT** penetrating the background fabric, like this:*

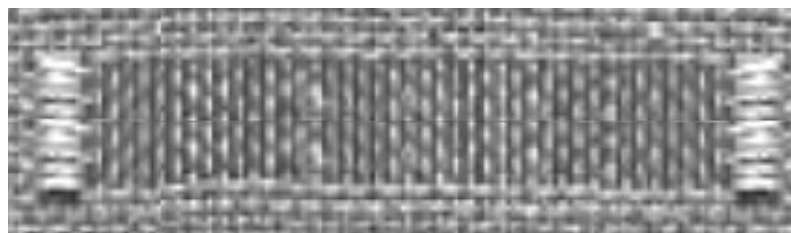
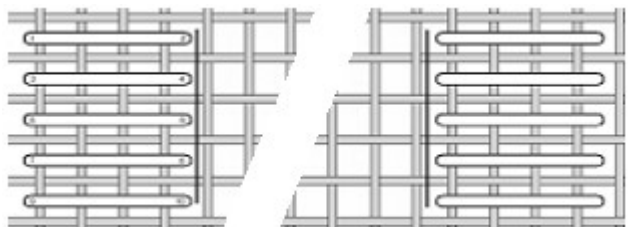


But today we're going to look at a **HEMSTITCHED CHANNEL**, with a twisted **INTERLACED STITCH**. This is also called a Somersault Stitch, or a Twisted Ladder Stitch.

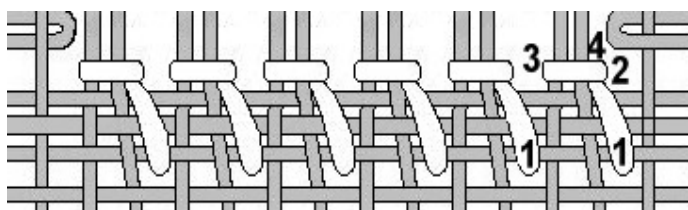
You will need a piece of evenweave or Hardanger fabric – **AIDA WILL NOT WORK**, as you need to remove horizontal fabric strands, creating a channel with vertical threads only, as follows...

Begin by anchoring the **ENDS** of a channel with satin stitches that cover at least 3-4 fabric strands wide – you can decide on the height and width, but make it tall enough to work with – at least 8-10 stitches tall, and maybe 40-48 stitches wide, so you have some working room. While we are going to start with a simple Interlaced Stitch, which requires fabric strands in multiples of 2, the more advanced version we will be learning next requires multiples of 4. Work both on the same channel, or create two different channels

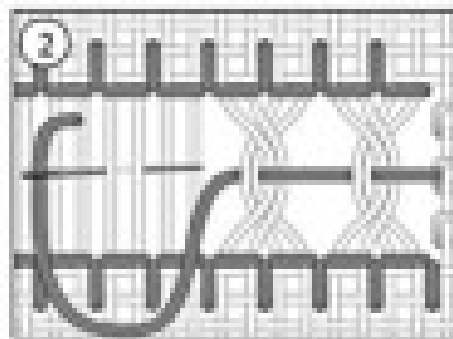
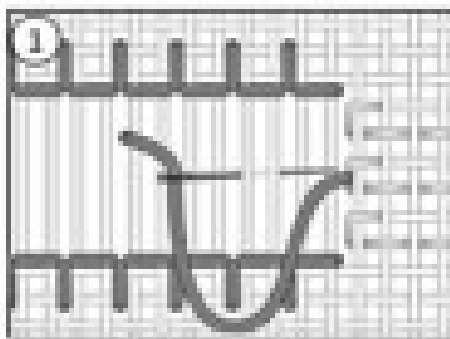
**CHANNELS:** As mentioned, **SATIN STITCH** the ends, then cut the fabric strands (where shown by the black vertical lines on the left diagram), pulling out the horizontal fabric strands, and leaving the vertical ones (as shown on the right below). The right diagram should look like the left picture when done.



**HEMSTITCH:** There are a variety of Hemstitches, which can be worked on the long the sides, but we have provided a fairly common one below. Hemstitching divides the vertical fabric strands into bundled groups. Work the bottom edge, then flip the fabric upside down, and work the opposite side. Be sure the stitches line up! Remember, the number of grouped threads **MUST** be divisible by 2 or interlacing, or 4 for **DOUBLE** interlacing (see next page).

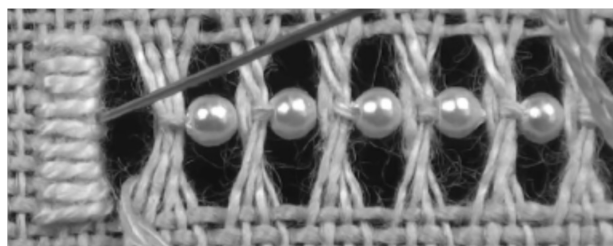


**INTERLACING:** Using a narrow ribbon, or contrasting floss, anchor the tail in the back of the stitching at the end of the channel. Count over **TWO** bundles of vertical strands (note that the bundles shown here are 2 strands each). Go **BACKWARDS**, under the bundle (of 2) nearest the needle, then **OVER** the first skipped bundle (as shown in diagram 1). **LEAVE THE NEEDLE IN PLACE**, don't pull it through the strands!!



Here's the trick to this stitch... **TWIST** the needle **BEFORE** pulling the floss / ribbon through (see the far right of diagram 2 above)! It's that simple. Repeat across the row...

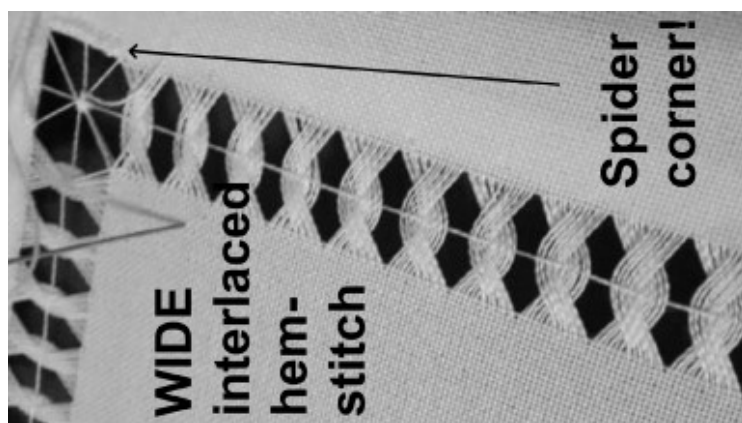
Want a fancier look? Try adding a **BEAD** before inserting / twisting to needle, to add some bling in between the twisted strands, as shown on the right:



**INTERLACING VARIATION:** Here's one that may be a bit more complicated to twist and lay in place! Work a simple anchoring stitch across every fabric strand in the channel, then twist all eight ungathered strands, for a wider lacey look!

They added arms in the corner, before continuing the interlacing on the opposite side, and it appears they are adding a SPIDER WEB in the corner...

You'll have to start another channel to play with this one, since the test channel created on the previous page had the fabric strands divided into separate bundles.



But here's the one I am really excited to show you, as this was a new variation to me, which I discovered while browsing the RETICELLA EMBROIDERY pics on-line. I pulled the diagram from a video, and added the instructions, to make it easy to follow.

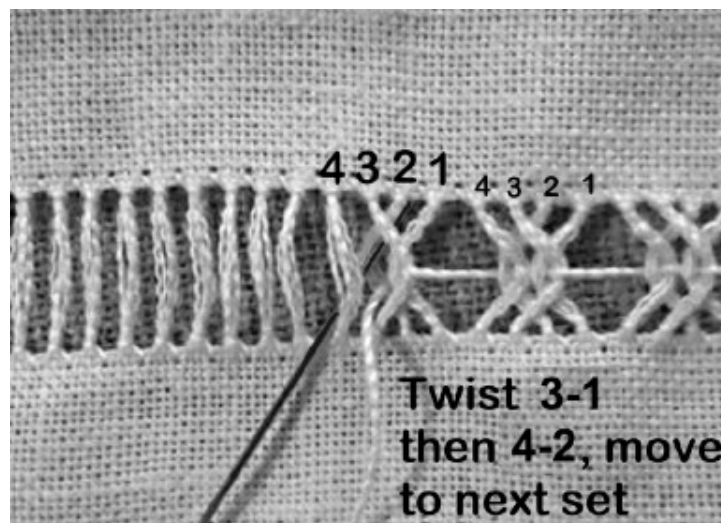
**DOUBLE INTERLACING:** This variation works on sets of FOUR (4) fabric strands, so work the hemstitching the same as you did for the first channel, just making sure the count is correct for this one.

As I mentioned at the beginning, for learning you may want to use the same channel, just make it nice and wide! Work half the channel in regular Interlacing, making sure the strands remaining are multiples of four.

I have numbered the strands 4,3,2,1, since all the diagrams I've provided are worked from right to left, but of course, you can reverse them and work the opposite direction.

Insert the needle from the LEFT, UNDER strand 3, and OVER strands 2 and 1.

Twist the needle UNDER strand 1 ONLY, and pull the floss or ribbon through the twisted strands.



Now move across, and go UNDER the fourth strand (from the LEFT), OVER the second strand. Use the needle to twist the 4-2 strands, and pull the floss / ribbon through the center, as shown on the far right (above). Isn't that pretty?

Again, you could add additional bling by inserting a bead between each double wrap I may play with this one a bit, and see how a bead inserted BETWEEN the 3-1 and 4-2 wraps would sit!

Want more variations on interlacing? How about this DOUBLE HERRINGBONE STITCH variation:

You can find a full color, more detailed version of this stitch by copying the following link onto your search bar:

<https://www.embroidery.rocksea.org/stitch/herringbone-stitch/double-herringbone-stitch/>

Happy stitching!

