

**Finishing  
For CGNA  
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Finishing a project is the final touch. There are so many possibilities. Before you frame or sew your work into its final form there are some things to think about :

**Neatness**

check your work by the following:

- Are all of the thread ends secured tightly?
- Have the tails been trimmed?
- Does your project need cleaning? See below for cleaning instructions
- Does your work need pressing? See below for pressing instructions

**Cleaning**

**One standard of preservation is that of reversibility: anything done to a piece should be able to be undone with minimal damage**

**WASHING**

Because wet cleaning is a chemical process, it is **not reversible**, and so should be used only with extreme care.

Whenever possible wash you needlework, in order to remove all the soil and body oils that have accumulated in the stitching process. Before cleaning a textile, ask the following questions

- **What are the characteristics of the fibres?** cotton and linen, are both stronger wet than dry, and so may be able to withstand a more mechanical stress than something like silk. Wool can absorb large amounts of water, and mats if washed in high temperatures.
- **Will the dyes bleed** . If in doubt as to the wash ability of a dye, apply a drop or two of water to an inconspicuous place and blot with a clean white cloth. If the dye transfers to the cloth, even in small amounts, the textile should not be washed
- **Is the fabric is painted?** If yes, it should never be washed; some other cleaning method should be used
- **Is the fibre silk or wool?** If yes, you will need to have your work dry cleaned. Be sure to inform the cleaner what fibres you used so that they will be able to deal with them correctly.

**What cleaner to use**

Commercial detergents should never be used on textiles whatever their claims of gentleness: Wash in a Ph neutral compound. There are several on the market such as “*Orbis paste*”, “*Fabric Care*”, etc. The Canadian Conservation Institute suggests Ivory dish soap as a last-minute substitution. Be sure to rinse well, any remaining soap will discolour through time.

**What to do if bleeding occurs**

If the colour does run (before the work is dry), one method to remove it is to soak in cold water with about ½ cup vinegar for about an hour. If the colour is bleeding, change the mixture frequently until it remains clear. This is not fool proof so caution is advised. However, once the work is dry the stain is usually permanent

## Drying

- Roll in a towel to absorb the excess moisture DO NOT WRING. Replace the towel after a few minutes
- Lay work face up to dry.
- Press as smooth as possible with you hands.
- Let dry completely.

**Pressing textiles** should be done with caution, as the heat may affect the viability of the fibres. More importantly, the fabric should always be cleaned before pressing, since heat may trap dirt and stains in the fibres to such an extent that the stain becomes permanent.

- Because hands contain oils and acids in the skin, washing hands- is recommended before you begin
- Press on the wrong side using a couple of towels to form a cushion for the embroidery.
- Cover the work with a damp pressing and iron lightly. Always use the lowest setting for either of these procedures **NOTE: If you have used man made fibres such as rayon or metallic threads. Be extremely careful as they will MELT**
- Take care not to put too much pressure on heavily stitched areas, as this will flatten the embroidery.

**Hint** when pressing linen press it wet then hang to dry thoroughly this will give it a crisp finish

## Framing

How embroidery is framed is as individual as the stitcher. Here are some questions to asked;

- Are all the materials acid free?
- Does the frame enhance the work?
- Does it require a mat or not?
- How much space is required around the work?
- Does it need glass or not-- is so what kind of glass?
- If you are having glass does it require spacers – this allows the work to breath.
- Professional framers use stainless steel pins and acid free double backed adhesive to mount needlework. Is this acceptable or should the work be laced-- see below

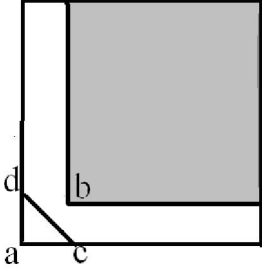
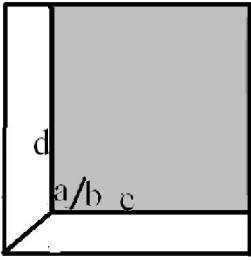
**The best advice I can give you is find a framer you trust and work with him /her**

## Mounting

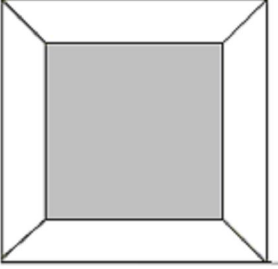
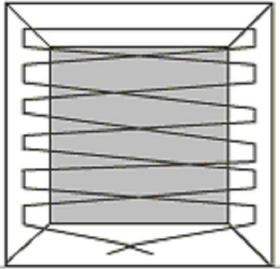
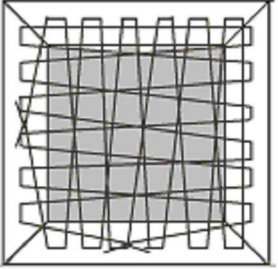
The most traditional way to mount needlework is by lacing. This method allows the work to be stretched evenly with little or no damage to the fibres.

- Use acid free mat board or foam core. Cut to fit your frame
- Trim the ground fabric leaving a good 2-inch margin-- remove selvages so the sides will give evenly
- Mitre the corners. --. See diagram
- Stitch the mitre in place starting in the middle and working to the point and back to the inside and return to the middle using a ladder stitch
- Using two needles and a strong thread take long vertical stitches from side to side and about ½ inch apart. (Like lacing a shoe) see diagram
- Repeat for the other side
- Tighten and straighten the work, when you are happy with the result fasten off the threads.

### How to mitre a corner

 <p>Fold point <b>a</b> to point <b>b</b> Trim bulk if necessary</p>	 <p>Fold point <b>c</b> to <b>b</b> and point <b>d</b> to <b>a</b> Stitch using ladder stitch</p>
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### Instruction for lacing

 <p>Mitred corners</p>	 <p>Using 2 needles on first side</p>	 <p>Using 2 needles on second side</p>
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### Finishing flat work

Not all pieces of work need to be framed. Some are destined to become bell pulls Christmas decorations, table runners or doilies etc. Whatever the final form the trick is to make it look professional. **TIP: Baste Baste Baste!** The more you baste the neater your work will be. Choose a thread colour that will contrast but will not be seen if you have to leave it in however, it best if you remove the basting threads.

Traditionally embroidery work was finished by hand using techniques such as running stitches, blind stitching, hemstitching both plain and decorative and many others. Today embroiderers most often finish their work using machines.

Pillows can made plain or you can add items such as piping and trims either commercial or they can be hand made to match the fabrics. There are several styles of pillow casings one-piece backs, overlapped openings and zippered openings. There are lots of good books on the market that will give you instructions on the basic sewing techniques required to complete your projects.

### Protecting finished embroidery threads and ground fabric

All natural materials are affected by exposure to light and pollutants. Always keep embroidery out of direct sun. This prevents fading and degrading of fibres. When storing threads or projects for an extended period of time, the best method of storing them is to use one of the following methods:

#### Flat storage

Flat storage is the best option because it provides the most even support for the fibres. The textiles may be placed in the boxes or drawers flat. If folding becomes necessary, acid-free tissue paper should be used to form soft rolls around which the folds can be shaped, to prevent creases from forming. Even so, folded textiles

should be removed and refolded differently every few months, to allow even wear on the piece

### **Rolled storage**

Textiles with a decorative side (such as velvets and embroidered textiles) should always be rolled with the decorative side facing out. This is because the inner layer, especially if there is a lining, may crease, stretch, or fold while it is on the roll. The rolled textiles can then be covered with a muslin wrapper to protect it from dust

Small pieces roll the item around a muslin covered on a fabric covered paper tube interleaving it with acid free tissue and place in a dark place.

Large textiles, such as tapestries or quilts, rolled storage is the best option. Use fabric-covered tubes around which the fabrics can be wrapped, being sure to line the selvages up with the edges of the roll.

### **To clean unprotected needlework**

Vacuuming is one of the safest and easiest ways to clean textiles.

- The fabric is placed on a clean, flat work surface. If the embroidery is particularly delicate, or simply as a precaution, place a piece of nylon screening over the end of the vacuum hose. The screen allows dirt and dust to pass through, but prevents individual threads from being pulled loose
- Use the vacuum attachment on the lowest power setting, move the suction over the embroidery until the entire area has been cleaned.
- Always remember to vacuum both sides of the work, as dirt may filter through to the other side
- Hanging textiles will need to be vacuumed less often than horizontal pieces, as there are fewer places where dust can collect.

### **Bibliography**

Embroidery methods .com

The textile museum

Canadian conservation institute

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