

**TIPS, HINTS AND OTHER MISCELLANEOUS STUFF**  
**For CGNA**  
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**Tips to a perfect piece of work**

- Always wash your hands before stitching
- Use a non-greasy hand cream to keep cuticles soft
- Work only with short lengths of thread 12 to 16 inches
- Always use the correct needle
- Use "poke and stab" method of stitching in evenweave to keep your stitches straight.
- Dangle your needle at regular intervals to allow the thread to relax and avoid knotting. When using pearl cotton turn the needle after every other stitch to prevent the threads from untwisting
- When you are finished stitching for the day secure your needle on a holder or in an area outside your working area
- Remove a hoop at the end of each stitching session. If you do get hoop marks spray lightly with cool water let stand for a few min and press out. **Note** you should test the fabric first to be certain it will not water mark
- Always work the signature and date unobtrusively into the design. If you wish to add more information a label, on the back of the piece is a good idea.
- Take time to relax your hands, arms, back, neck and shoulders also your eyes

**Cutting fabric for embroidery**

- When cutting evenweave (other than Aida and hardanger) pull a thread and cut thru the space left.
- Cut Aida and Hardanger along the thread lines
- Cut all other fabrics with a ruler and rotary cutter for an straight smooth edge

**Sealing edges**

- Overcast by hand or machine
- Use masking tape –only if you can completely remove the taped area
- Chemical fray preventers stop fraying. Use only if you can completely remove the treated area. They will discolour

**Transferring designs**

There are several ways to transfer your design to the fabric.

- Trace your design onto tracing paper place on ground fabric and baste. Remove paper.
- Using a light box or window place pattern securely and trace using a water-soluble marker or mechanical pencil
- The oldest way is to prick and pounce. Pierce holes in pattern and pounce with chalk. Join dots with mechanical pencil

**Backing cloth**

- Use a backing cloth (Muslin etc.) on flimsy materials such as silk. A backing cloth gives the added advantage of starting and finishing threads without fear of showing in the work.

- Stretch both layers over the frame being careful to keep both smooth and taut. **OR** stretch the backing fabric over the frame. Lay the ground on the taut backing fabric and baste firmly onto the backing

### **Protecting the surface of work**

- Place tracing paper over the entire surface of the work. Cut a hole where you are working.
- Grime sleeves are simple to make
  1. Cut a piece of fabric 9 inches wide by the width of your frame plus 1 inch for seam allowance.
  2. Sew seam ½ inch
  3. Turn in 1-inch top to form pockets repeat for bottom
  4. Thread elastic through pockets
  5. Clip over the bottom edge of frame

### **Embellishment**

**Note 1 :** Beads are measured at the widest point on the outside of the bead

**Note 2;** Mill hill beads has a conversion chart mill hill to DMC on the web site

#### **Bead Descriptions**

- **Seed Beads:** are small beads that are almost round in shape and come in a variety of finishes. Seed Beads are: 2.5 mm. Petite Glass Seed Beads are: 2 mm
- **Magnifica Beads:** are cylindrical beads with large holes and thin walls. They are very uniform in size and shape. Most commonly used in Bead Weaving. They are: 2.25 mm
- **Bugle Beads:** are cut glass cane in a variety of colors and finishes. The diameter of the bugle beads is 2.5 mm and equivalent to a seed bead. Bugle Beads are: commonly 2.5 mm & 6 mm long but can be longer
- **Pebble Beads:** are large beads, almost round in shape. They are 5.5 mm in size,
- **Pony Beads:** . They are mostly used for knitting and crocheting they are 4mm

### **Adding beads to project**

Add beads as a last step.

- Use a beading needle to add seed beads. The eye of the beading needle is smaller than other needle types. Use needle threaders.
- The thread color should match the bead colour
- Use a half stitch to add the seed bead unless otherwise indicated in the design instructions.
- When stitching rows of beads, start at the lower portion of the project and work your way up.

### **Other embellishment ideas**

Charms

Found objects

old jewellery

tassels

twisted cord

iron on braids

hand made braids

buttons

## The Ideal Work Box

Make this list reflect your needs: Add any item that makes your work easier. After all your kit is to aid you in stitching

Least two pair of scissors <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ Embroidery</li><li>➤ General purpose</li></ul> Variety of needles sorted & labelledStraight pinsNeedle threadersTweezersLaying toolRubber band for griping needles.Strawberry Emery for cleaning needlesSoft tooth brush to remove lint from removed stitchesMarking equipment- <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ Coloured sewing thread.</li><li>➤ Transfer pencils</li></ul> Wooden hoops - 2 sizesClamp for holding hoop or frame	Thimble if requiredDoodle clothMagnifying glass or glasses etc.Eyeglass cleaner and soft clothMagnets or pincushion for holding needles etc.Note taking supplies <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ Pens and pencils</li><li>➤ Pencil sharpener</li><li>➤ Eraser,</li><li>➤ Ruler</li><li>➤ Note book</li><li>➤ Tape measure</li><li>➤ Calculator</li></ul> Ort box for collecting bitsVelvet or felt board for beads etc.Stitch reference bookNail file or Clippers
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**HINT:** to avoid loss or mix ups -- mark all your equipment.

## Other tools

There is a multitude of gadgets on the market to aid in your stitching a few examples are:

- Magnets to hold needle and scissors
- Magnet chart holders
- Fancy stitch counters
- Magnetic wand to find pins and needles

## Re-purposed tools

We often need a special tool that is not made commercially so don't be afraid to invent something to solve your problem. Here are 3 examples:

- Small plastic box with magnet to hold needle threaders
- Soft toothbrush to remove bits of threads left from ripping
- Pill bottle hold pearl cotton balls

Mill Hill beads About .com	<a href="http://www.millhillbeads.com">www.millhillbeads.com</a> <a href="http://www.about.com">www.about.com</a>
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