

HOOPS, FRAMES, AND STANDS

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For GGNA

October 2011

The use of a hoop, frame or stand is a matter of personal preference. However, the choice sometimes depends on the type of work you are doing. For example, anything you sew such as a Buttonhole Stitch, Stem Stitch, etc. works easier without a hoop or frame. However, on the other hand, work that requires the ground fabric be held taut such as Pulled Threads or Surface Embroidery stitches such as Satin Stitches have a more professional look when worked on hoop or frame.

Hoops

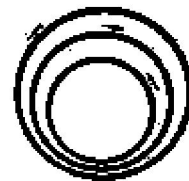
Hoops come in plastic or wood; round or oval; large and small. Choose a hoop you find comfortable to hold. It should hold the fabric firm. A good hoop will cost a little more but it will last you a lifetime. Wrap the hoop with a cotton tape. This will help hold your fabric taut, and in the case of linen fabrics (that has a hollow fibre) will help to eliminate crushing. **NEVER** leave you hoop on you work. Removing it allows the fibres to rest.

Advantages

- These types of hoops are readily available.
- They are lightweight and are easy to carry.

Disadvantages

- Every time you place it on the fabric you get a slightly different tension.
- If your project is large, you will be placing the hoop over your stitching and thus running the risk of damage.



Stretcher Frames

Choosing the Frame

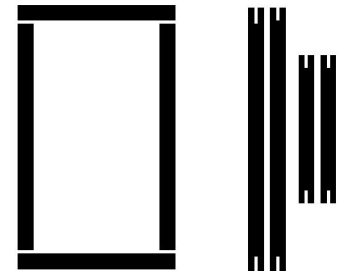
When you choose a stretcher frame, look for wood that is well finished. Rough wood will snag your fabric and threads. Most patterns will give the size of stretcher to purchase. Always check to see if it is the interior or the exterior measurement. You require at least 1" of working space around your project in order to pass the needle through the ground fabric.

Advantages

- Can be made to various sizes. Bars come in 4" to 30" (sold in pairs).
- The ground fabric will be held taut and the tension will remain even. This is important in techniques where you are manipulating the warp or weft such as Pulled or Drawn threads or large surface embroideries such as Crewel.
- Use when working with Linen fibre as it avoids crushing the fibres
- Will not mar your stitching by pressuring your work

Disadvantages

- The bottom edge of the work can become soiled.
- The larger the frame the more difficult it is to handle. A stand or clamp is recommended.



NOTE

The frame should be 2 inches larger than the ground in order for easy stitching

How to set up a Stretcher Frame

- Cut the fabric to fit the frame. Allowing enough ground fabric to wrap around the frame.
- Using tacks or staples fasten the ground fabric to the frame.
- Start on one side of frame and fasten the ground fabric
- Pulling straight and taut fasten the ground fabric to the opposite side.
- Repeat for the other 2 sides.

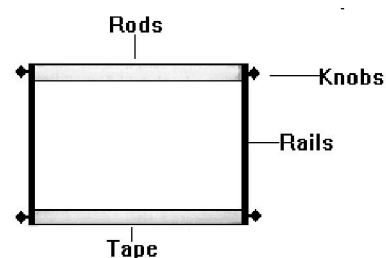
NOTE: if your ground will only fit on the face of the frame run a strip of masking tape over the tacks or staples in order to stop any snagging of the threads as you work. **Note:** *only do this if you re able to remove the fabric that has been taped*

Scroll frames

Scroll Frames consist of side rails and rods with twill tape for fastening the ground fabric to the rod. The ground fabric is then rolled onto the rods hence the name Scroll Frame.

Advantages

- Scroll frames come a variety of sizes. Rod and rails are purchased separately allowing the stitcher to choose the correct size for the project.
- A good alternative when the work is large and a stretcher frame is heavy and cumbersome.
- Helps to keep needlepoint canvas from becoming distorted, thus making it easier to block when finished.



Disadvantages

- Does not hold the ground taut on the sides (unless you lace them, but this is nuisance as you have to re-lace each time you advance the scroll)

NOTE

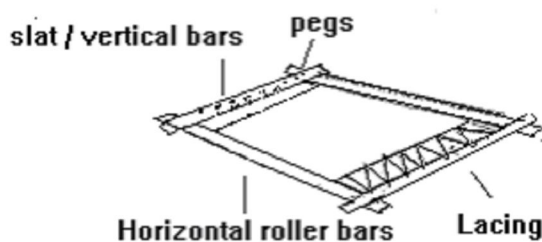
The rods should be 2 inches larger than the ground in order for easy stitching

How to set up a scroll frame

- Baste the ground fabric to the twill tape attached to the rods.
- Place rod in the rails
- Wind the fabric onto the scroll so the back of the worked will be on the bottom scroll and roll the to the inside on the top rod. This aids in keeping the work clean.

Slate frames

This is the traditional frame of professional embroiders and has been around since medieval times. It is used on the horizontal plane rather than the 45-degree plane that the modern frames use. It gives perfect tension and it is easy to re-adjust.



Stands, Clamps and Weights

A stand, clamp or frame weight allows you to stitch with both hands free. There are many kinds of stands on the market. There are articulated stands, trestles stands, stands that sit on the floor; stands you place on a table: stands you sit on.

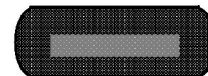
Clamps

Clamps are ideal to help with supporting larger frames; they come in a variety of styles and sizes. Pick a clamp that has a wide jaw and is light weight and easy to open and close



Frame Weights

Frame weights are used as to counter balance a frame on the edge of a table. It is usually made from a sturdy fabric and filled with a heavy substance such as buckshot.



Advantages

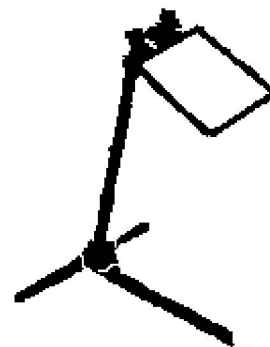
- Holds large frames that would otherwise be too difficult to handle.

Disadvantages

- Does not rotate for ease of finishing threads
- Some require a table.

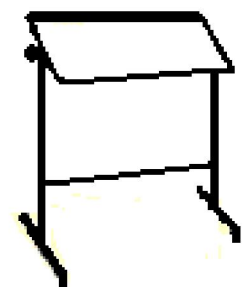
Articulated Stand

This is the most versatile of the stands. It is jointed to be adjustable to fit every stitchers needs and the head rotates to allow for ease in finishing threads. This type of stand also has additional pieces such as chart holders, and accessory trays and some have a place to put lighting and magnifying equipment. They are available in both floor and table models.



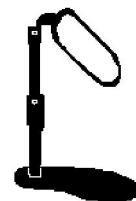
Trestle Stand

Consists of two inverted "T legs" the frame (either stretcher or scroll frame) is attached to the trestle in the middle.



Fanny Frames and Lap Easels

This type of frame is idea for stitchers with limited space. You place the bottom bar on the chair and sit on it. This type of frames folds flat and is easy to carry. They are available in a hoop style (hoop is attached permanently) or the more versatile frame holder.



Advantages

- Rotates for ease of finishing threads.
- Holds large frames that would otherwise be too difficult to handle.

Disadvantages

- This type of frame is less versatile.
- Some require a table.
- The floor stands are limited to the type of chair you can use.

Magnification and Lighting

The two items go hand in hand. They are often combined into one piece of equipment. There are many ways to magnify and light your work but they all do the the same thing allow you to see your work clearly and avoid eye strain.

Magnification

Magnification is the process of enlarging something only in appearance, not in physical size.. Here are a few options:

- Magnifying Glasses.
- Magnifiers you clip on regulaur glasses.
- Stand magnifiers either table or floor models.
- Magnifying lenses you wear around your neck
- Head band magnification equipment.

To determine the magnification you require:

- Hold a chart 18 inches away.
- Start with the lowest level of magnification. Work up until you find the strength that gives the clearest and brightest legibility.

Lighting

Proper lighting is essential to stitchers when a surface is well illuminated it is much easier to stitch. When choosing a light look for a daylight bulb. This allows you to see the differences in the values of your threads. There are many specilty lights on the market and ultimately what you choose will be personal preferreces and your situation . The correct light is often found by trial and error.