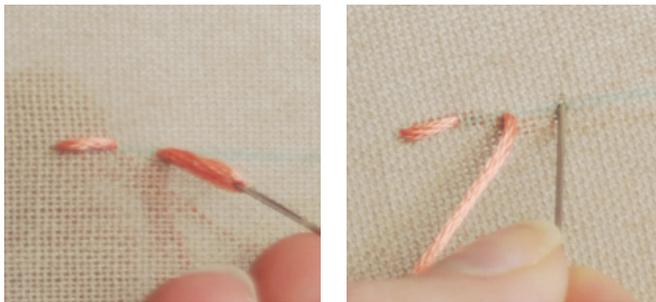


RUNNING & BACK STITCH



Are you ready to get stitching? Today in this series, I'll be showing you two of the most basic stitches. They are easy to learn, but they are really versatile, and I use them all of the time. They are truly my favorites!

Get some fabric in a hoop, transfer a pattern (you can even just draw a line to start with), and thread your needle. Here we go!

A running stitch is what you often think of when you think of hand sewing. Come up from the back, then back down again. The stitches that I'm showing are about 1/4" long.

Come up again from the back, leaving a space about the length same as the first stitch. Go back down again.

Repeat this along the pattern line. I should note that my lines are drawn with a water-soluble pen, so the spaces where you see blue lines will rinse away. When stitching on a pattern that won't wash away, a running stitch isn't the best choice.

A back stitch is just as simple, but you need to think a little differently. Come up from the back, but instead of starting at the end of the line, start about one stitch length in.



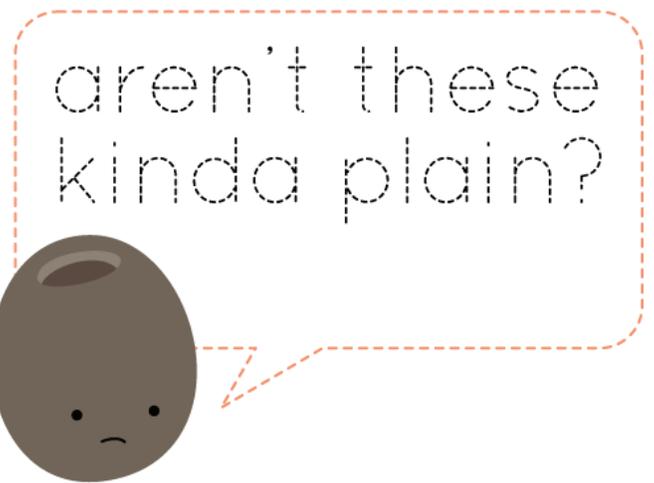
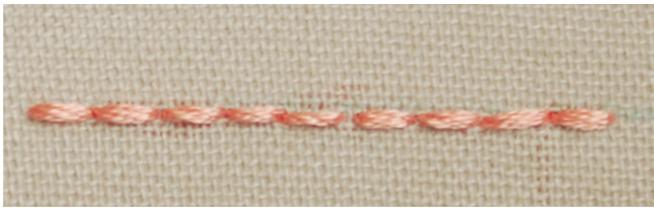
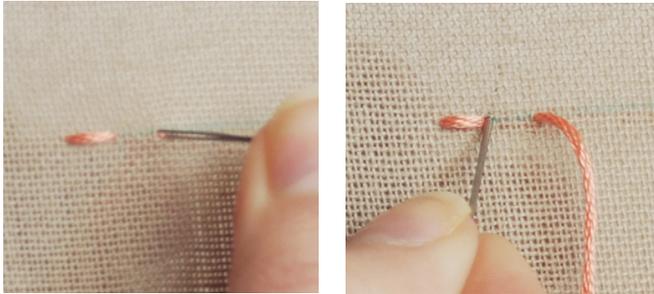
Go back down, but in the opposite direction that you are stitching. This is where the name “back stitch” comes in.

Come up again to the front, a stitch-length from the first stitch.

Go back down, back-stitching to the end of the first stitch.

Repeat this along the pattern line. It’s as simple as that!

TIP: Shorter stitches handle tight curves better.



These may not seem very interesting, but they are perfect for outlining. Still, you can fancy them up, or change up your stitch-length or spacing for some fun effects! (see Jenny Hart’s book, Embroidered Effects, for even more ideas!)

You can weave a contrasting color through a running stitch and it looks like this.

Or wrap a contrasting color around back stitches for a stripey effect.

But even without these extra steps, you can change up the look of your stitches by making some stitches long and some short, or by leaving more or less room between them.



See what a difference that makes? This is why I love these stitches. If you would like to try stitching some tree rings too, you'll find the pattern on the next page so you can practice!

