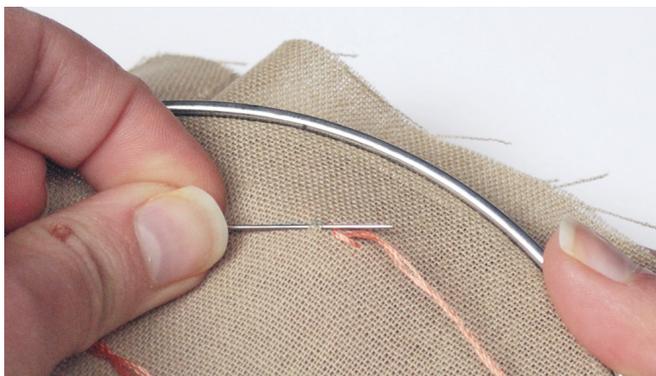


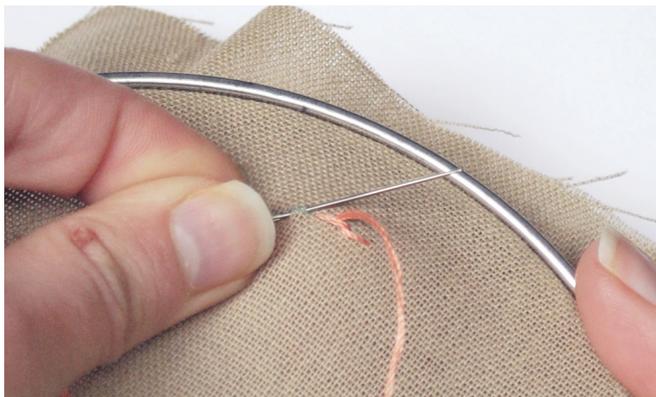
STEM & SPLIT STITCH



Last time, I showed you two of my favorite stitches, and this week, we have two of my least favorites. There's nothing really wrong with them, but everyone has their own tastes, right? My problem with the stem stitch is that it alluded me for so long that I still avoid it, and the split stitch? It always feels messy. Still, they are basic, must learn stitches, and you may love them! Hey, I may even love them after this!



Get your hoop ready, and let's get started! For the stem stitch, I'm using three strands, but you can use what you like. This stitch is basically a series of stitches that overlap each other a little. It makes for lovely curves when you do it right.



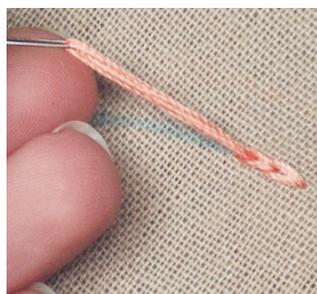
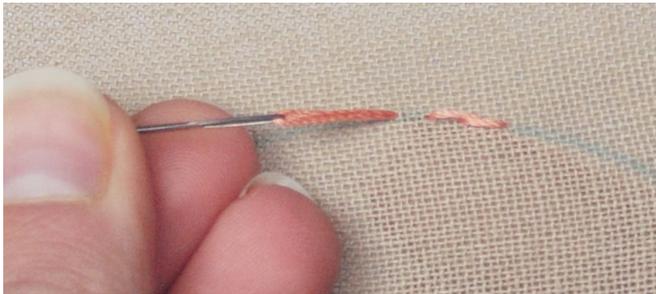
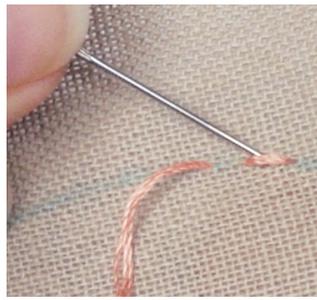
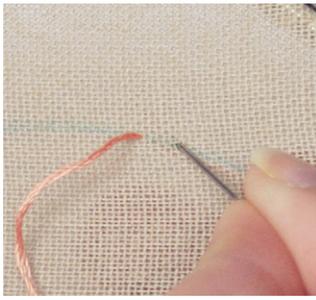
As someone who likes the stabbing method, I'm tempted to take a single stitch, come up from the back just behind the end of my first stitch, and continue on. This doesn't work so well.



Instead, use the sewing method with the fabric a little loose in the hoop. Come up from the back. Push the needle through to the back and then back up to the front, all in one stitch. The needle comes up on the line, just a bit behind where you inserted the needle.

Pull the floss through (not too tight!), and take another stitch as you did the first.

Continue along the line, and it looks like this! No joke, this may be the best stem stitching I've ever done using this method.



For a long time, I thought I would never learn how to do this. It just didn't work, and I gave up. But then I learned another way, and it saved my stem stitch.

This way is more like doing the back stitch, and I love that! Start out with a back stitch.

Come up again about a stitch length from your first stitch, then insert the needle just behind the end of the first stitch. It should go underneath the floss from the first stitch.

Again, come up like you're back stitching, and go back down behind the previous stitch.

When you keep on like this, you'll have a neat little row of stem stitch. I find this way works so much better for me.

One thing that I've also learned is that it looks a lot more smooth if you take smaller stitches. There are times when longer works, but I like the look of shorter stitches for this.

Now, how about splitting up your stitches? More strands are good for this, but try different numbers to see what you like. Even numbers are a good thing though, and you'll see why.

Take a single stitch, moving forward. Come up from the back with the needle splitting apart the first stitch.

Go back down so the total length of the stitch is around 1/4" (counting the part that overlaps with the previous stitch).

Come up again, splitting the previous stitch.

That's all there is to this! The split stitch is a classic, but as I said, it feels messy to me. Maybe because it reminds me of the back side of my back stitch. Regardless, it makes a good solid line, and that's a nice thing to have.

