

## Embroider with Confidence by Christen Brown

I really feel that the art of embroidery should be enjoyed, and the best way to do this is to be confident with your stitching techniques. Perfection is not something that I insist you strive upon, but a familiarity with the tools and stitching aids can make you feel more confident when creating and stitching your own designs.

### Journals and Samplers

- I keep a journal handy to use to jot down stitches. I reserve a few pages for each type of stitch and add in the variations as I use them.
- Practicing your stitches on a square of muslin will help the technique sink in. I have a square for each type of stitch, then write in the name of the stitch and the variations of the stitch.

### Tools

- Needles in a variety of sizes
- Needle Gripper (use to pull the needle through thicker fabrics)
- Needle Threader (use for threading the needle)
- Scissors: embroidery
- Stitch Bows by DMC (use to keep floss from tangling)
- Thimble
- Tomato Pincushion (use to keep track of the needles)
- Thread conditioner

### Stitching Guides

Working with a drawn line or other shape will help to insure an accurate design. Use any of the stitching guides below and an erasable pen.

#### 6" Quilter's Ruler

Use a ruler to mark the shape and length of a stitch.

#### Quilter's ¼" Tape

This tape has a sticky side which can be placed onto the fabric. It can be used as is or marked off in increments for shape and length of a stitch.

#### Art Templates

Light weight plastic templates have shapes such as a variety of circles, lines, triangles, or squares.

#### Found Templates

Buttons, or other shapes such as a plastic thread or ribbon spools can also be used to mark a shape.

### Organization and Documentation

Take notes on a piece of paper with a diagram of the design you are working on. Jot down things like the type of thread used, how many wraps you used to make the French knots, or how many strands of floss you used for a stitch.

### Tips from the Essential to Eclectic

- Perle cotton ball: thread the tail that is wound around the outer portion of the ball into the needle, cut off the correct amount of thread.
- Perle cotton skein: cut the thread at the knot, unwind the amount of thread and cut. RE-twist the thread back into a skein.
- To begin a skein of floss, pull the tail that is next to the printed color # on the label. The thread should come out of the skein easily with no snarls.
- When the thread begins to twist, hold the fabric base upside down and then let the thread and needle dangle down, the thread will unwind.
- Think of a mistake as a design opportunity that you had not thought of yet. Once you repeat a mistake, it becomes another element in the design.

© Christen J. Brown • Email: [thestoreonthecorner@gmail.com](mailto:thestoreonthecorner@gmail.com)