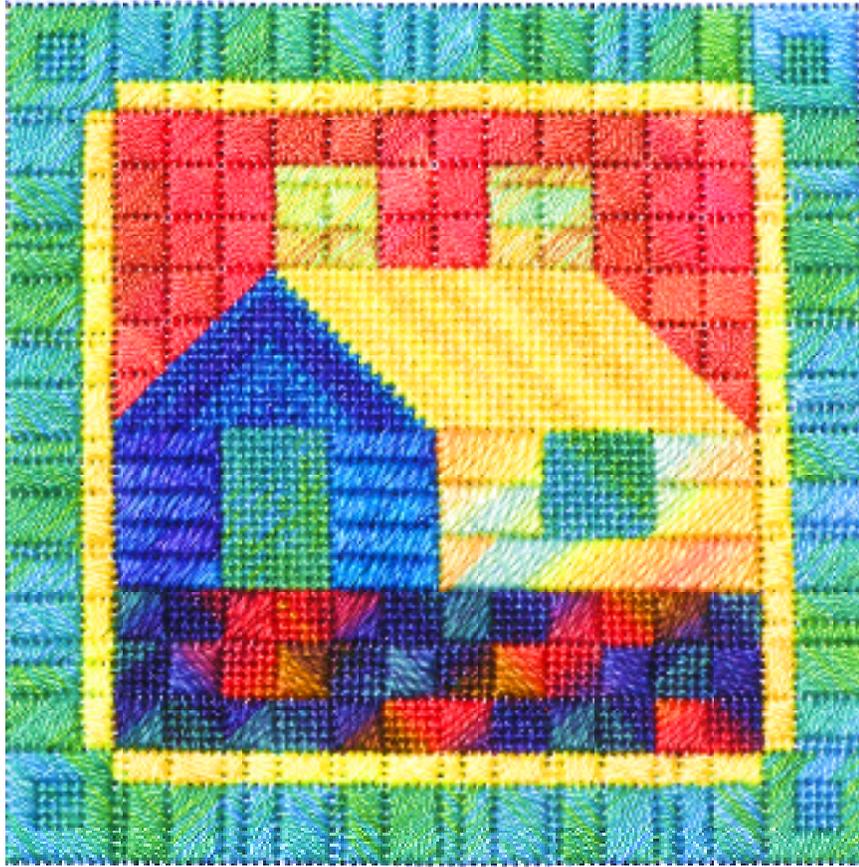


Building Blocks

How to Needlepoint - the next level

instructions by Lois Caron



MATERIALS

**#18 canvas, 8x8. Finished design size with border is 4.5" square OR
#20 linen, 8x8, Finished design size with border is 4" square**

#22tapestry needles

Threads:

Watercolours[®], one yard each of 143, Autumn Frost
235, Tanzanite
238, Glowing Embers

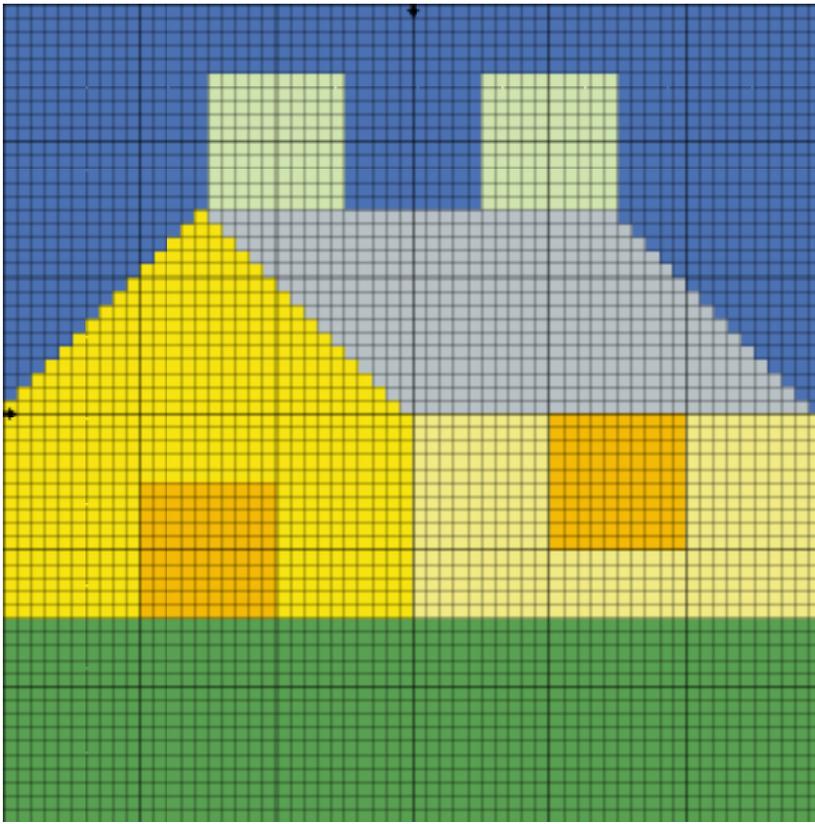
Wildflowers[®], 057 Buttercup, 1 skein
229, Oasis, 1 skein
180, Green Tea, 2 yards

Waterlilies[®], 144, Pomegranate, 1 yard

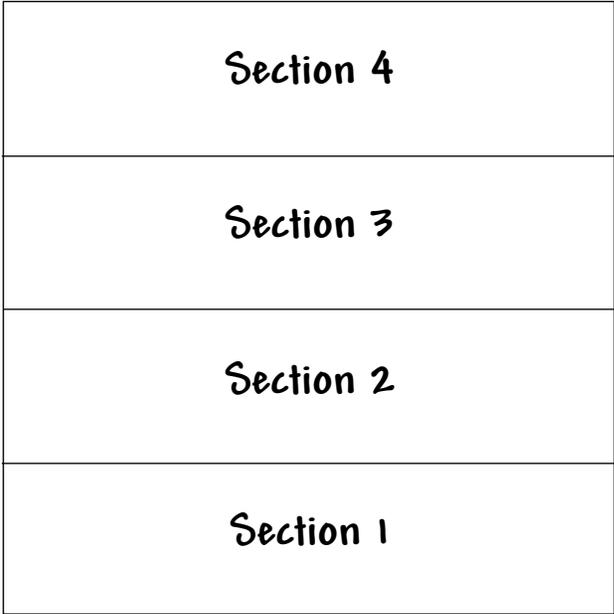
**4 artists stretcher bars, 9" long, or needlepoint frame to fit canvas
thumbtacks, preferably the non-rust kind**

Building Blocks

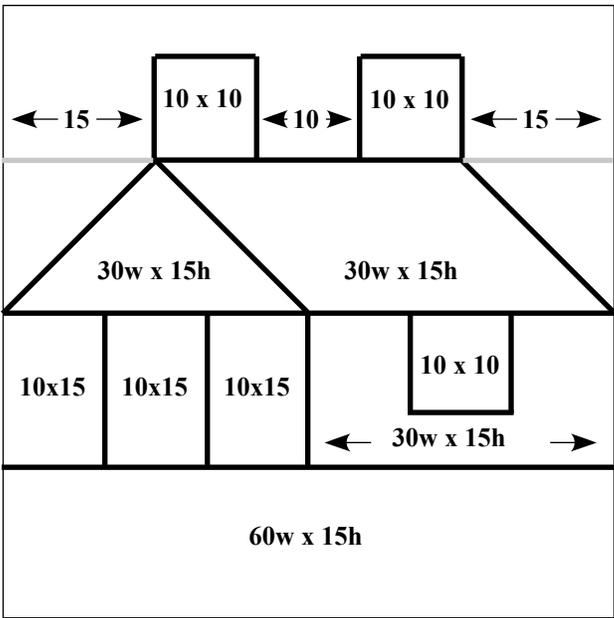
Laying the Foundation



Step 1



Step 2



Design Size without border = 60x60threads

Just as in a quilt design, this pattern can be divided into blocks.

To begin, mark the center 4 threads on the canvas. Count out and mark the 30th thread in each direction. Use a pencil and lightly draw the outline.

Step 1. Divide your square into four horizontal blocks, each 15 threads high.

Step 2. Leave Section 1 blank. Divide Section 2 into blocks each 10 threads wide.

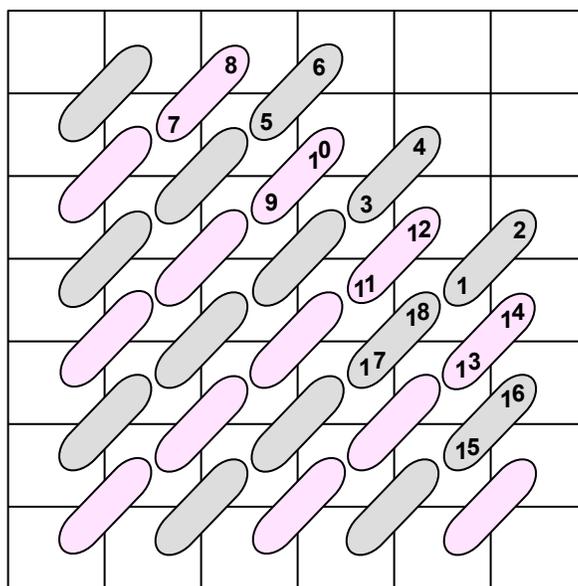
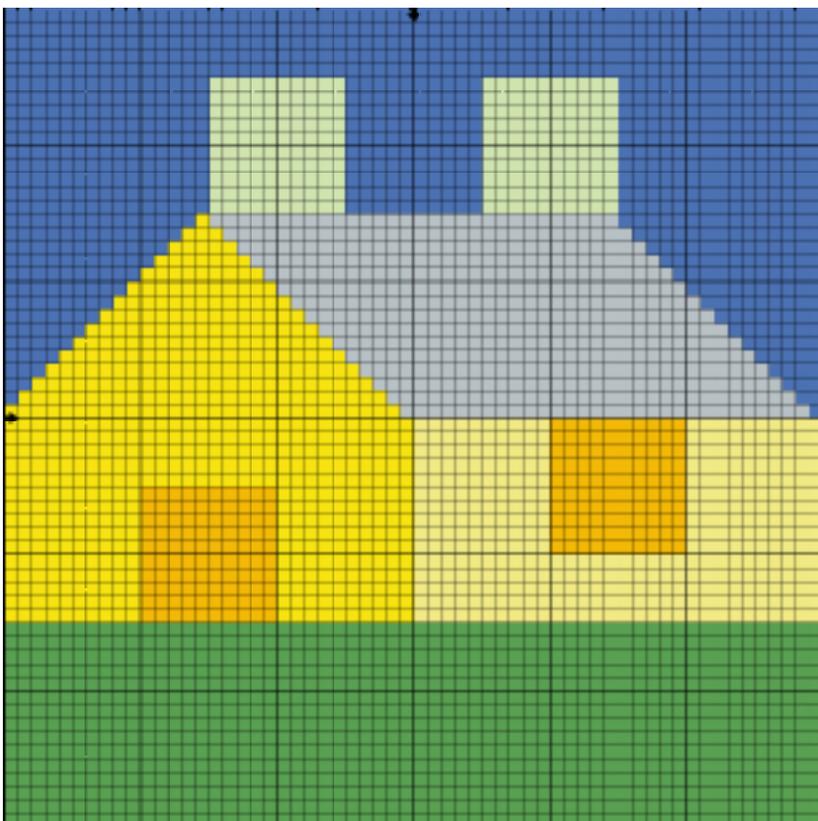
Step 3. Mark the diagonal lines for the roof in Section 3.

Important: on the left side, your first stitch will be the outermost line you have already marked for your square. On the right side, the outer-most line of the square belongs to the sky, not the roof. See the chart above.

Step 4. Mark the chimneys and erase the portion of the line shown in gray. You are now ready to start stitching.

Building Blocks

A Review of Basketweave



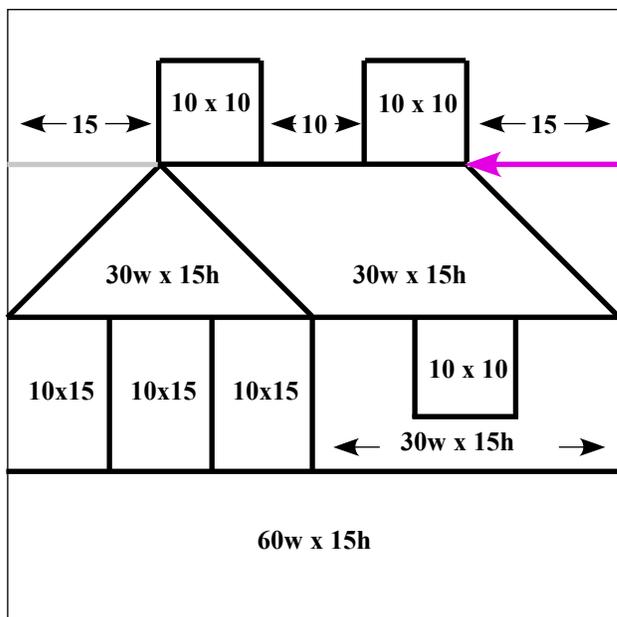
Basketweave

(starting with a diagonal line)

Presumably, you already know how to do basketweave, but here are some tips for working with variegated threads.

Step 1. Begin with the roof in Section 3. With two strands of Wildflowers 057, Buttercup, stitch the roof in regular basketweave. If you want to work with the grain of the canvas, start in the appropriate place.

Design Size without border = 60x60threads



Working with the grain of the canvas

If the outer edge of the roof is vertical canvas threads, start here.

If the outer edge of the roof is horizontal canvas threads, start here.

Wildflowers is a single strand matte cotton in variegated colors. The two strands of Wildflowers will not match, but this is good as it will help soften the striated effect created by stitching a multi-colored thread in diagonal rows.

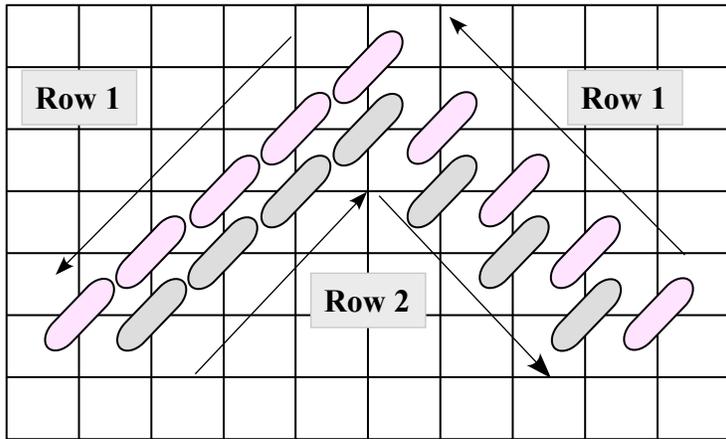
Building Blocks

A Review of Basketweave (cont)

Step 2. Watercolours is a 3-ply pima cotton. Separate the strand and use only one ply in your needle. Work the peak of the building in the special technique described below. Use 235, Tanzanite.

Modified basketweave

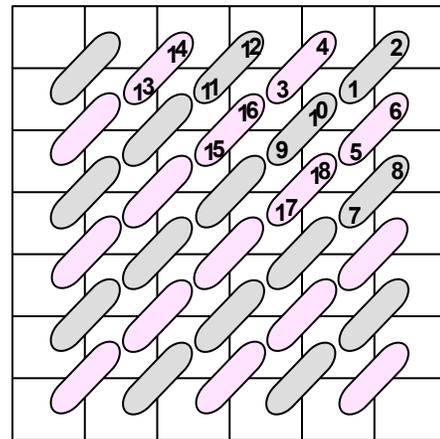
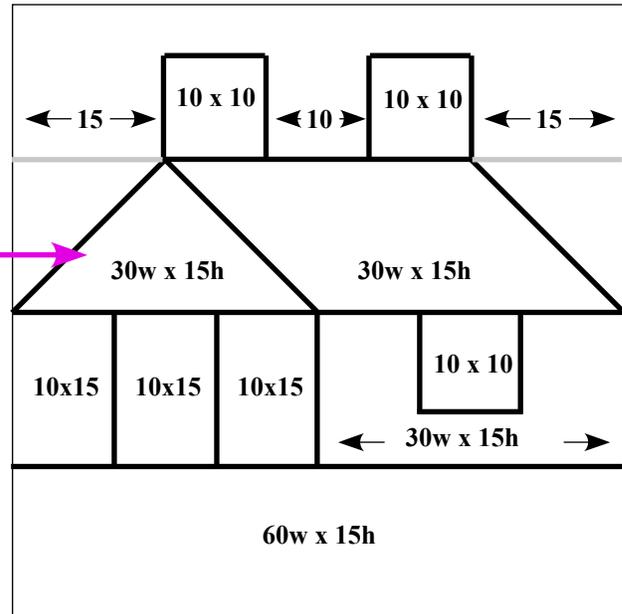
Striated lines are inevitable when stitching variegated threads in diagonal lines. Here's how to turn this to your advantage.



Work the first row (pink on the diagram) up one side of the peak and down the other.

Work the second row (gray on diagram) in the reverse direction.

Repeat these two rows until the entire area has been filled.



Basketweave

(starting in a corner)

Step 3. Complete the window and door in Section 2 using two strands of Wildflowers 229. Oasis. You can do each area in regular basketweave, or choose one of the options below.

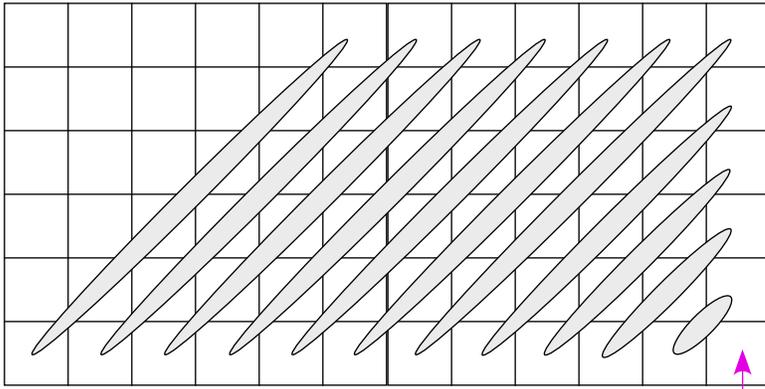
- Divide the window into four blocks, each 5x5 threads. Stitch each block separately. This will help mix up the colors even more.
- Divide the door into three vertical blocks. Two will be three stitches wide and the middle one will be four threads wide. Stitch each separate block in basketweave.

Building Blocks

Satin Stitch Blocks

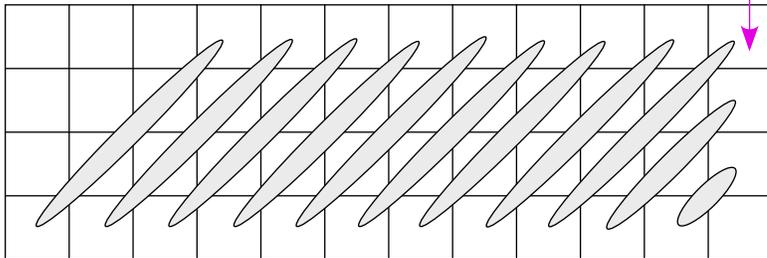
It's easy to add extra interest and texture to your needlepoint with decorative stitches. One of the simplest is Satin Stitch, which is merely an elongated needlepoint stitch. It may be worked vertically, horizontally or diagonally.

The diagonal satin stitch, which is used for the remaining areas of this pattern, can be stitched over as little as two diagonal threads. For most of the pattern, we have chosen to divide our basic blocks of 15 threads into units of five.

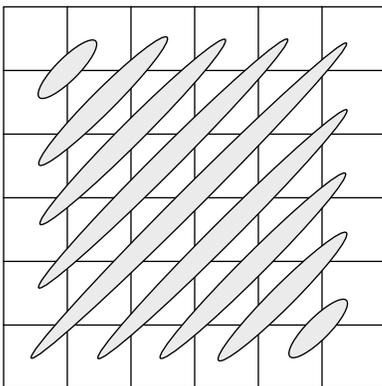


Satin Stitch Block

worked over 5 threads in a continuous row
worked over 3 threads in a continuous row



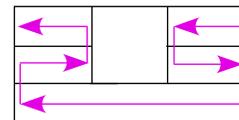
Step 2. For the section of the house around the door, work in similar fashion, but do the rows of satin stitch over three threads instead of five. Use Watercolours 235, Tanzanite.



Satin Stitch Block
5 x 5 threads



Step 1. Work blocks of satin stitch over five threads with one ply of Watercolours 143, Autumn Frost.



Start here

You may keep the canvas in an upright position for each row.

Have you noticed that the light reflection off your stitches changes with the size of the stitch?

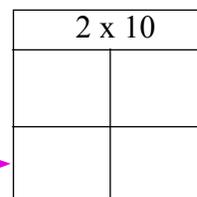


Step 3. The ground in Section 1 is divided into blocks each 5x5 threads. Alternate blocks of satin stitch with blocks of basketweave. Use one ply of Watercolours 238, Glowing Embers

Building Blocks

Satin Stitch Blocks (cont)

Step 4. The chimneys are also divided into blocks, but in a different configuration. Stitch each individual block in satin stitch before going on to the adjacent one. Use two strands of Wildflowers 180, Green Tea.



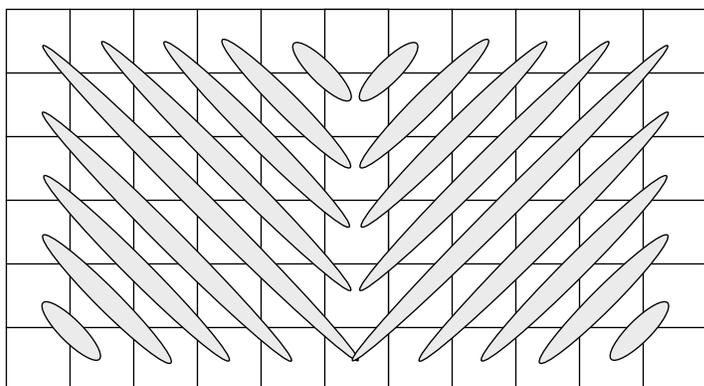
Step 5. Use Waterlilies 144, Pomegranate for the sky. Waterlilies is a hand dyed variegated silk. You should use four of the twelve plies in your needle. Separate the strands and put them back together smoothly. It is helpful to use a laying tool to be certain that the threads lie side by side when stitched. Twisted threads will mar the finished appearance of your needlework, even if this isn't immediately apparent while you are stitching.

4 blocks each
4 x 10



The sky is also divided into blocks of 5 x 5 threads. Each block is to be stitched in satin stitch, but this time alternate the direction of the stitches in each block. Begin in the upper right corner with stitches slanting in the regular direction.

Note that the difference in the way the light reflects off your stitches is even more pronounced now and will change if you rotate the canvas.



Satin Stitch Blocks
5 x 5 threads
each block alternates stitch direction



Changing Threads, Colors &/or Fabrics

Big differences occur when you select other colors and/or threads and you should feel free to experiment. Here is an example stitched on 20 count linen. All of the colors have been changed and some of the threads.

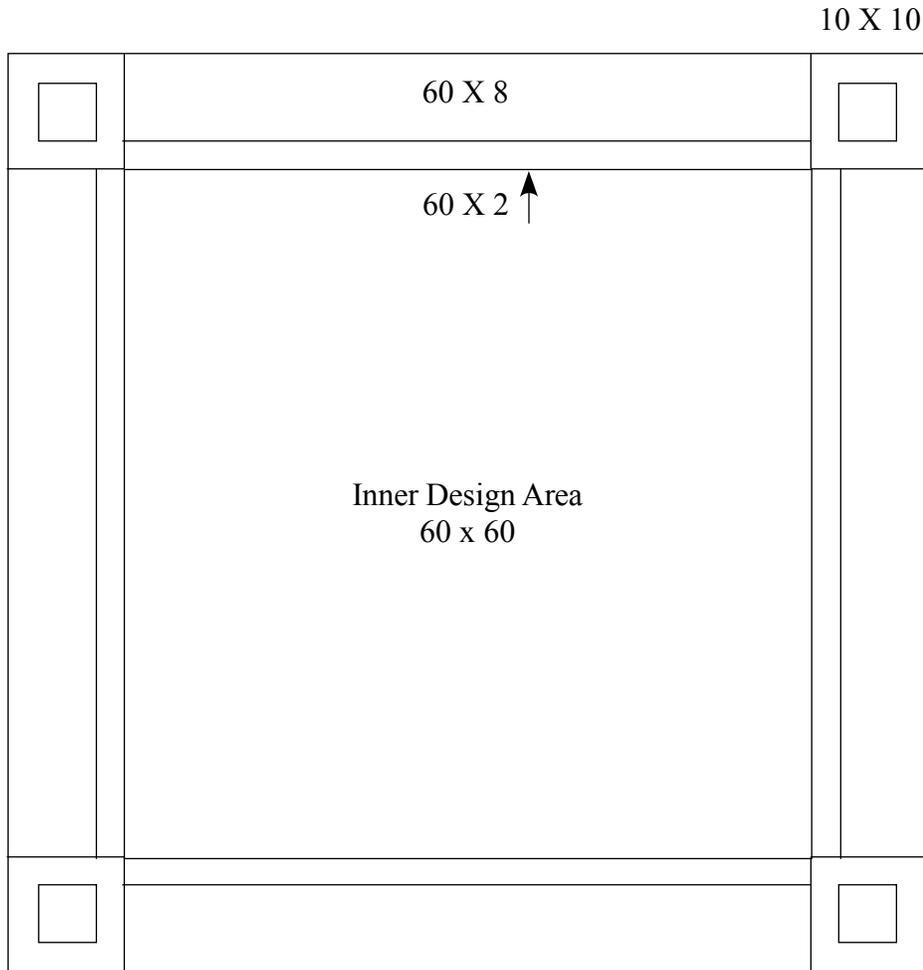
Waterlilies was used for the window, door and border instead of Wildflowers. The sky was stitched with one strand of Impressions, a 50% wool, 50% silk blend.

Your ground fabric is also important to consider. Linen is more flexible than canvas, which contains more sizing. Therefore, think about the intended use of your finished product when selecting ground fabrics.

Building Blocks

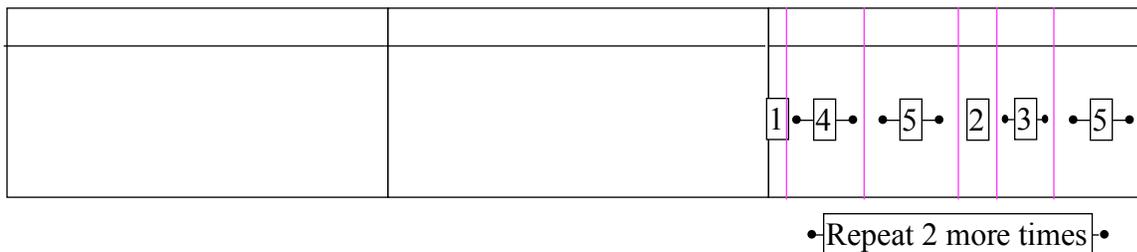
The Borders

As you have already seen, dividing a design up into blocks doesn't mean that all of the units must be square. The border provides plenty of opportunity for experimentation. For this version of the design, we've chosen to divide the area as follows:



Total Design Size with borders
80 x 80

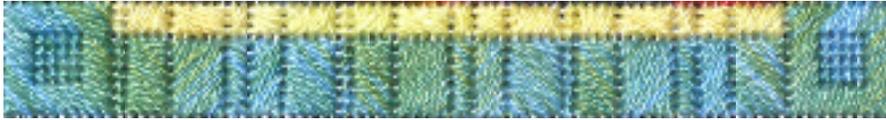
Each side of the border was then subdivided into three equal sections and then segmented again.



Building Blocks

The Borders (cont)

Although the entire border can be stitched in just one color, we've elected to use two colors. The thin inner border is stitched with two strands of Wildflowers, 057, Buttercup and the remainder of the border is done with two strands of Wildflowers 229, Oasis

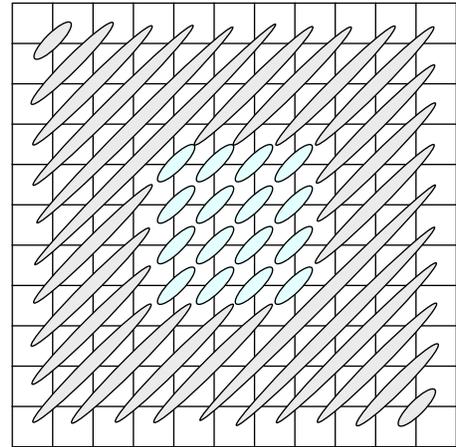


As in the sky, the direction of the satin stitches in each block is alternated.

In addition, the direction of the satin stitches in each row is reversed.

The corner is a combination of satin stitch and basketweave. Note how the satin stitches have been lengthened on two corners in order to maintain a smooth appearance.

The direction of the satin stitch blocks on each corner of the design have been reversed, but the basketweave stitches remain the same. In the version illustrated on page 6, the satin stitch blocks all face in the same direction. The option is yours.



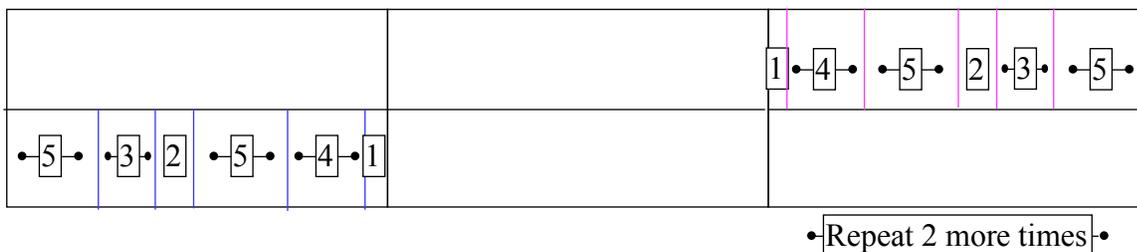
Variations

There are many options for arranging the border space so if you feel inclined to be a little creative, get out your pencil and some graph paper and try out different possibilities.

Satin stitch alone will allow for plenty of ways to assert your individuality, so try some variations on the ideas we've presented.

For instance, in the version shown on page 6, the border is divided into two equal rows of 5 threads.

Each row is further divided into the same smaller segments as in the cover model BUT the sequence has been reversed for the inner and outer rows.



When your piece is complete, block if necessary and frame or finish into the item of your choice.