
Embroidered Constellations with Faith Hale

Chapter 1 - Embroidered Constellations

Overview

- Hi there, I'm Faith Hale. I'm a professional crafter and an amateur stargazer. Constellation embroideries are a beautiful way to bring the night sky into your home. Whether you're into astrology or astronomy, these 12 different patterns are beautiful and simple even if you've never made a stitch before in your life. We'll cover the star stitch, the straight stitch, and two different ways to transfer your designs.

Materials

- You have two options for the finished size. You'll need either a four-inch hoop or a six-inch hoop. Both of them look really nice with the patterns we have available, but it kind of depends on how much blue you want to be showing. So you can see here with the four-inch, it takes up a lot of the space, but if you wanted to use the six-inch, you'll have a lot more space around it. So, you'll need either a four-inch or a six-inch. You'll also need an eight-inch square piece of lightweight or medium-weight cotton in a navy blue. You'll need two colors of embroidery thread, I like gold and silver. This is the Kurtzy brand, spelled with a K, but you can also use DMC. A metallic thread can be a little bit tricky to work with, so you might wanna do some practice stitches before diving in. You'll also need a pencil, a marking pen, or tracing paper, so one or the other. A pair of scissors, size 16 embroidery needles. And while there are 88 officially recognized constellations, we have included 12 in the materials PDF, one for each sign of the Zodiac. Go ahead and print that out and then I like to cut out the quarter of the one I'm using, so there's four per page and I've cut out just Cancer.

Transfer image

- Be sure to cut out the pattern you're using and have your fabric cut out to eight inches square. We'll position it right in the middle. Then we'll slide our tracing paper underneath. The tracing paper comes in a couple of different colors, but because we're working with this dark blue, really anything is going to show up. And so we'll slide the paper underneath here. And then I like a pencil as a marking pen because essentially we're just gonna color in the dots. Try not to put too much pressure with either hand because that can smudge slightly. And you could transfer the lines if you want to, but I prefer not to. I think it just makes it a little bit cleaner. When we take it away, the marks will have transferred. If you wanna use your marking pencil, you'll actually start by poking holes in your pattern exactly where you were coloring over before, and you can do that with your pencil. And make sure on the back it's not gonna close up. And then you can lay that down, and now you're using it more as a stencil. So you can use this with any fine-tipped tailor's chalk or light-colored marking pen. And you wanna hold it down. Take a peek. Oh, look at that, that transferred very well. At this point, you wanna grab your embroidery hoop. And holding the nut steady, some of them don't have them, but this one does. You'll twist your screw away from you, and it'll open it up. And I'll slide the bottom hoop underneath. And the reason why we cut this eight inches square and the scoop is six inches is because it'll make this easier if you have an inch on either side to line it up. And then you'll place this hoop on top. And it makes it pretty taut. We'll hold the screw again and turn it towards us. And it might cause a little bit of buckling, so after you've done a few turns, go around and make your fabric taut. Tighten it again. Make sure your fabric is still

taut. And crank it until you can't get it any tighter. And now you're ready to embroider.

Embroidery

- Begin by taking a forearm's length of thread. So just this long. I know that's how long you're supposed to do with hand sewing anyway, but I extra mean it this time. Metallic thread can be kind of wily and cumbersome and this thread in particular, because it has sparkles in it. Once it goes through the fabric a couple times it starts to fray a little bit, so working with smaller lengths is definitely better. And a forearm's length should get you all the stars in your pattern. You can see it's a very fray-y thread, so I will lick it. And then I'm folding it around the head, so I'm pulling it really taut and that should make it easier to go through the eye. We're using just a single length, not a double length, so give yourself a tail of a couple inches. And then run your fingers down the thread. We're just doing this to release some of the tension. And then we'll make a double knot, leaving ourselves 1/2 inch of tail. And we're tying the second knot directly on top of the first. And actually you may as well go ahead and tie a third one. We wanna make sure it's really secure. Now we'll begin stitching our stars. I like to start at the top, so we're gonna go about 1/8 of an inch above our dot, come up, and then we're going to go down 1/8 of an inch below the dot. And we're making a plus sign. So we're going to the left and going to the right. Then we're going to make a little cross on top of it that's going to be shorter. So we're going to go up here, down on the lower right quadrant, up on the lower left quadrant, and down in the lower right. Now we're gonna repeat this same process and I'm going to keep going until all the stars are finished. At this point we'll go ahead and make a knot on the back. And I like to go through the stitch I just worked and tie a single knot. And then you're going to make another knot directly on top of that one. So you'll tie the knot and then kind of hold the thread as close to the knot as possible and then tie it under your finger. Kind of like you would if you were wrapping a present. We can do that one more time, just to make sure it's secure. So we have that nice big knot. And we'll clip it with a 1/2 inch tail. Thread your needle with the gold thread in exactly the same way. We'll begin to work the straight stitch portion. Go up about 1/8 of an inch from your star. I think it's a really nice effect if there's some separation between your straight stitches and the stars. And have your diagram at hand, so you can see where the stars connect. So it's really easy with this one, with Cancer, but if you're doing something like Gemini it's a little bit more intricate, so have that at the ready. Now if we don't tie a tight enough knot this can get a little baggy and does not look as nice. So it's particularly important to have a nice, taut knot here. And I always think it's a little bit easier if we are anchoring our knot on something else. So I'm actually gonna go under this silver thread here and tie our knot. And then we'll tie a knot on top of it. This part can be kind of fiddly, but it's really worth it for the longevity of your project. Tie our third knot. And there we have it. For our very final step we'll cut off the excess fabric on the back. I think this just makes it look a little bit nicer and lay flatter against the wall. If you have duck billed scissors that's great for this part, 'cause they cut really close to things. But any regular scissors will do. It's as easy as that. Whether you're a Scorpio or a Sagittarius or do not believe in astrology, this ends up looking really beautiful on your wall.