Mixtape: 5 Embroidery Stitches with CBTV

Chapter 1 - Mixtape: 5 Embroidery Stitches

Running stitch

- Today's prompt is to make a doodle with black thread using an embroidery hoop in the top left corner of your quilt top. It probably looks the same everywhere, but choose a corner and that will become the top left corner of your quilt top. We'll begin by putting our embroidery hoop in place. You'll take the smooth, smaller piece of the hoop and put that below your quilt top, and you can choose a little bit of variety of where exactly in the top left corner you want your hoop to be. So I'll toggle in about four fingers worth on either side, and I'll anchor my hoop. Now I need to choose my needle. I like these milliners needles. My favourite size is the second to smallest. If you're new to them, you might find it easiest to thread the second largest needle. You're also welcome to use any needle and any thread combination that you like. So for example, if you wanted to use sewing machine thread, you could do that. It counts it's black thread. These rules are a fun thing to push against as you follow the pattern. I'm gonna thread my needle by putting my thread between my index and my thumb. I might roll the thread together to compact it a little, and then where I can see just enough that it looks like a speck of dust, I'll look through the eye of the needle, line it up and thread my needle. Sometimes I need my thumbnail to help me get it all the way through. I'll send my threads so that they're staggered, and the longer thread is the place where I want my knot to be. I'll create a bit of a thread sandwich here with my finger and my needle, and not from the short tail, but from the very long tail. I'll wrap three times to the tip of the needle. I'll pinch and then I'll send my needle the direction that needles love to go. As I send all of the thread through that coil in my fingers. It's works a lot like a French knot, but this is called a quilters knot. I'm also going to use my gripping thimble and my pushing thimble. I find that particularly helpful when I am embroidering with a hoop. You can be intuitive with this. I like to call it a doodle because I'm here and I'm telling my story of making this quilt. I met creative bug and I thought it would be fun to make a doodle inspired by the way that a bug flies through the air. Maybe not a mosquito, but something more like a bumblebee. So I'll send my needle through anywhere I want and I can begin to make my doodle. You can create a rule for yourself by perhaps setting a timer right now and saying that you will doodle for the next 10 minutes or 15 minutes, or you can make a rule about your thread. I took my thread from my hand to my close shoulder, and when I run out of thread, that will be the end of my doodle. When I'm using the running stitch in a hoop, I like to match the eye of the needle with the end of my thimble. I like to hold it lightly with my other fingers as I guide things through my non-dominant. Left hand does a lot of work as well. You'll see that I am pushing up and down with my fingers alternately. So here, my index finger is pressing up as I pierce to the back, and then my middle finger presses up against the needle as I pierce through to the front. You of course, can find your own way to do a running stitch, but that's what works really well for me. When I'm using a hoop, I love using the running stitch as an embroidery stitch. When I'm making a quilt, I find it to be uniquely fast. It creates a beautiful line, and because I'm working through just one layer of fabric, the line looks different. I get a shorter amount of stitches per inch than I do when I'm quilting. So it plays really beautifully visually when I look at the running stitch embroidery compared to the running stitch that I use to quilt. So here, my bumblebee is doing a bit of a loop in the air. You can feel into the day, see what emerges. Also, don't think about it too hard. If you don't have something like being on creative bug filming to inspire you to make the line of a bumblebee, you can just get

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started. You can show up curious. Let your hands start stitching a running stitch, and whatever you get, there's no wrong way to work. I find when I'm teaching quilting, one of the hardest parts for my students is feeling like they've got a lot of pressure, decision fatigue, being unsure of how to start or feeling that pressure of a big blank white piece of fabric, and what in the world are you gonna do to get started. So this prompt for a doodle has the purpose of getting you to loosen up and feel comfortable, and it's a good way to get a big bold mark on your quilt without worrying. I'm gonna keep stitching until I run out of thread. Now I'm at the very end of my thread, taking my last stitches. I'm gonna go through to the back, if you would prefer to have exposed knots on the front, that is completely okay and allowed. I am gonna do a little knot here on the back. Ooh, and it's gonna be very fingery. I'm using the Taylor's knot. Maybe that's too challenging. I'll use the eye side of my needle to pick out my last two stitches To make it a little easier to tie this Taylor's knot, I want to create a loop that goes up. Put my finger on top of that, and now I'm gonna pass the thread from finger to finger, passing that loop to the other side. This loop I want to close, nice and snug against the fabric. And just like I'm helping my mom wrap a present, I'm going to pull the thread through. I'm gonna do two of those. I find that two Taylor's knots is a size that won't pop through to the front. I was perhaps a little too bold trying to tie a knot with only two fingers worth of thread, but it doesn't matter because it's going to be on the back of my quilt eventually against some batting. So any kind of knot that you're able to tie will be good enough for this. It's fun to take it off of the hoop and see how that constraint of the hoop inspired you to make a unique and fun shape.

Chain stitch

- I'm gonna show you how to do the chain stitch, and we're gonna do it here. The chain stitch can be done in a few different ways, but my favourite way to do it, I learned from Jenny Hart, who's the owner of Sublime Stitching, and it is a bit of a game changer. And that's how I'm gonna show you how to do it here. To start, let's look at some finished chain stitch. So this is the compass sampler that I designed, and you can see these rows of chain stitch here parallel rows of chain stitch. It sort of looks like a chain link necklace or a knitting stitch to start the stitch. You'll make one little tack mark at the very top of the line. And I'm working from the top down, so I'm making one little tack mark that the first link in the chain is gonna attach to. So teeny little line. And now I'm gonna go to the bottom of this printed link. Now to create the first link, I'm going under that little tack mark. And my needle's not going through the fabric, I'm just going under the sort of bridge that the tack mark created. I like that. And then I'm gonna go straight down and that creates the first little link and the second and all the other links are gonna attach to the previous one. So now I'm going back down to the bottom of the next link. And to attach it to the first one, I'm going under that first link, not under the first tack mark. Under the first link. Go back down. I love this Variated thread. So much, so fun to work with and watch how the colours change as you go. Oops. You can see as I was pulling my thread through there, it sort of nodded itself and it has, there's a little loop in the thread. And one way to get that loop out is to stick your needle through the loop, give it a little tug, and then I use my hands to just kind of pull it the rest of the way apart. I notice with this chain stitch and some other stitches that as you're going along the thread sort of twists on itself. And one helpful thing can be to hold your hoop up and just kind of cos the twist out of the thread so that it's not gonna be nodding up on you again and again, like it just did. So that can be helpful if you're noticing that your thread is not cooperating whenever you're done with the colour that you're using. And you wanna start with another colour, you'll just go down underneath the fabric, pull it all the way through, and then you'll nod off or weave the ends under, like you did with other stitches. I'm just gonna weave

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mine under back here. And that is the secret of the chain stitch. Now that I've showed you this sort of game changer way to do the chain stitch, I'll Jenny Hart, I'm gonna show you the way that I originally learned, which I think is much more difficult. So let me show you here next to it. It's going to create a stitch that looks almost identical, perhaps it is identical, but it's worked differently. For this method of the chain stitch, you're gonna come up from underneath and instead of working from top to bottom, you're gonna work from bottom to top. And your left thumb, I'm right-handed. So my left thumb is gonna control the thread and my right hand is gonna control the needle. And it would be the opposite if you were left-handed. Of course, my thread comes up from underneath. I'm gonna make it into sort of a C, see how the thread's coming up from underneath and it's sort of laying here in this C shape. And now I'm gonna put my needle right down next to where I came up originally and rock my needle down and then come up. So you can see there's a little space there and my needle's up here. And then pull the thread behind my needle. And then now I can pull the thread the rest of the way through. And that creates the first loop. And you can see how that little link in the chain looks just like this one over here. And now I'm gonna make a second link in the chain going down also inside the top of that pedal shape or the link. Rock my needle up here to come through. I'm sure that for some of you, this method will be easier. A lot of these embroidery stitches have different methods that result in the same design. Embroidery's been around for a long time and I like to think of it as sort of like, you know, there's a lot of different ways to make chocolate chip cookies and they all taste pretty good. And same with embroidery stitches and lots of other things. You know, there's, there's not really a right way and a wrong way. There's, there are just different ways. I'm getting to the end here of this line of stitches. And now if I'm doing it with this method, you need to make one final little tack at the top to secure it in place. There we go. So this is the bottom to top method, and over here is the top to bottom method. They both result in the same looking chain stitch, but they're just work slightly differently. Let me know in the comments which one you decide that you like best.

Satin stitch

- The next stitch that we're gonna do is a smoother stitch called the satin stitch, and it's a way to fill in space. So make sort of a solid surface of thread, a great way to make a a filled in circle. You could use it to fill in text if you wanted to have a really chunky font, you can fill in a whole background with it. I'm gonna show you how to just get started on a small scale and make a satin stitch circle on a separate piece of fabric over here. The first thing you wanna do for the satin stitch is to outline it in the back stitch. So we learned the back stitch in the last segment. It's one of the best line stitches 'cause it makes a one long continuous line. I'm gonna outline a little circle here that I'm then gonna fill in with the satin stitch. So I'm using a variated thread here. I'm just gonna embroider a tiny little circle and then I'm gonna fill it in. I'm doing a circle 'cause it's an easy shape to demonstrate, but you could do any shape. And later on I'm gonna show you some samples of different things that have been sat and stitched. If it's easier for you, you could draw on a shape first using a pencil or a disappearing ink marker. Okay, there we go. Now I've got a circle and I'm gonna fill it back in. So starting on one side, I'm gonna come up just inside that back stitched circle, and I'm gonna make one long stitch that goes from one side to the other. This, this circle is less than a quarter of an inch in diameter, so I can make one long stitch that goes all the way across it. You really wouldn't wanna make your stitches more than about a half an inch long. As a general rule, of course, rules are meant to be broken. So your stitches could be a lot longer, but they might sort of start to wave in the wind. So I went down there, I came up right next to it, and I'm gonna go across to the other side that

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come up right next to it. Here I am just going back and forth filling it in. Oops, I've got a little knot there. A lot of times if you just poke your needle there, see how I just put my needle in that loop and that pulled that knot out? Don't panic. If you get a knot, most of the time you can get 'em out. If you just take a deep breath and kind of relax as you're pulling it out, then don't let the thread sense your tension. Okay, I'm just about done. I've got see maybe one or two more stitches. Let's see how much this fills. I will take a look at that. That looks pretty good. If you've got any gaps, you can go in and add another line to fill it back in, but I think that looks pretty good. I did a small circle, but you can do any shape you want. It's great for a chunky text or any shape that you wanna fill in with a solid colour.

Couching
- Today's stitch is couching. It uses two threads at once, so you'll have a thick thread underneath that's being couched down with another needle and another thread and even another color if you like. Attaching it with thin parallel lines as you go. Here's an example on this in-progress sampler. You can see this is orange thread that's been couched down with this beautiful variegated thread over the top. So this thread is really cool. It changes not only shade but color as you stitch along. So I really like that one in the way that it looks over the top of the thick orange. Here's another example with a yellow yarn couched down with a green pearl cotton. I'm gonna move this sampler out of the way and get my threads ready. So I'm using two different threads, like I said today. This first one's actually a knitting yarn. I'm not sure what type of fiber it is, but it's nice and chunky. You could use anything at all. You could even use something that doesn't need to necessarily go through a needle, like a pipe cleaner or a raffia or hair or something like that. This we're gonna put through a needle. It does make for a more finished effect. So I've got that one threaded already. And the yarn would be a nearly impossible to get through a milliner's needle or an embroidery needle. So I'm using a tapestry needle that has a bigger eye and these are more challenging to embroider with because the eye is so big to be pulling back and forth through the fabric but with couching, you're only gonna come up once at the very beginning and once at the very end. So it's no problem at all to use the tapestry needles. For the thread that's gonna be couching down my yarn, I'm using a milliner's needle again and I'm using this Sulky thread that comes on a spool like this, sort of the equivalent of one or two strands of embroidery floss. So I've got that threaded in my milliner's needle tied together at the end. And this is that really cool color changing thread. I'm still gonna use my rubber finger paper sorter 'cause it keeps my hand from getting too sore. So with this yarn, I'm gonna tie a knot at the end of this as well. And then come up at the beginning of one of these lines that I want to couch down. Here's a printed one here. Again, if you're using a scrap piece of fabric, you could use a blue marker to draw a design on your fabric first if you like. So I'm just gonna come up at the very beginning. I have to tug a little bit to get that yarn to come through this tightly woven fabric. I'm gonna tighten up my hoop just a little bit. It keeps getting loose. There we go. Now that I've pulled the thread through, I don't really need to interact with that needle anymore so I can get my other needle ready. I've got this printed line here that I'm gonna follow using my left thumb, since I'm right-handed. I'm gonna hold my needle in my right hand and I'm gonna use the left thumb to kind of pull that thread out of the way and I'm gonna come up right on that line and then move that off to the other side and then go down over the top of that orange yarn and secure it with that stitch using my right hand to pull that needle through. Again, I'm gonna come up on that printed line and again, even if you're working on scrap fabric, I do recommend drawing something to follow because it's nice to be able to have that line to follow so you can sort of snap the fabric right to that

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printed line. So coming up on the line here, moving the orange yarn off of the line and then moving it off in the other direction, going right back down. So you're sort of creating a framework for that orange line as you go. So I've just made one line over the top, one stitched line, so to speak, with this connecting variated thread. You could also double it up and that's what it did in that first sample. So once I've made one loop over the top, then I can go again and to make that twice as thick. And there's the only reason to do that is decorative, which is the whole reason to do any embroidery is that it's decorative. So you might make three marks and then skip ahead and then three marks and then skip ahead. Or you could vary how many you make. It's really up to you. There are a lot of different threads to embroider with and one of the things that I recommend not embroidering with is metallic thread or rayon thread 'cause they tangle really easily and they can just be such a major headache. However, if you're couching, you're not really going up and down through the fabric. So this orange thread here that's being couched down, this is yarn would also be somewhat of a headache to embroider with, but this would be a great opportunity to use something metallic or rough or even really smooth like rayon. Those things are really frustrating to embroider with 'cause they tend to knot up and tear and break, but they're great for couching. So you could couch down a metallic line with a really smooth and easy to work with cotton or pearl cotton or embroidery floss or something like that. And it's a great way to add a little bit of sparkle to the project that you're working on. Even if you're working on plain fabric, I highly recommend drawing a line on your cloth first because it's so nice to be able to know exactly where you want your needle to come up and to go down again. So as you're going up and coming down with the attaching needle, the yarn snaps right into place. You could also totally freehand it, but if you have a particular design in mind, I do recommend drawing it on first. I'm making these stitches about a quarter of an inch apart at this point, since this is a straight line, just a great aesthetic choice, but they could be farther apart or closer together. But just like with the back stitch, if you're going around a curve, you'd want the stitches to be much closer together so that it looks curvilinear instead of angular. I wanted to address the issue of tension. So as you can see here, I've been sort of tugging on the orange thread as I go to keep it lying flat. However, you could also not do that or even sort of tug in the opposite direction. You can see here as I pull that down, it creates a little bubble and when I pull on it, it lies flat. But you could use an extra needle laying around and puff it out like that on purpose before you pull your other needle down. And then in that way create sort of a inchworm effect with couching too. So I like for this one, I'm choosing to do it flat, but you could also make it loopy like that and that would be a really cool textural effect as well. Similar to all the other stitches, you're just gonna bring your needle to the back and tie off one needle or one bit of thread at a time. So first I'm gonna tie off this connecting thread just by going through a nearby stitch. I'm gonna go through a couple times and then go through that loop and I'll make two knots. This thread is, feels a little slippery, so I'm gonna be sure to do two and I can cut that thread off. And then with the big thread, same thing. I'm gonna pull this down to the other side, make sure it looks nice and tidy on the front. Flip it over, and I'm gonna weave this through. Make sure you're going just under a thread and not through your fabric when you do this weaving bit. I'm gonna do the same thing, just make a little knot like that. Ta da! Let's look at some other examples of couching. Again, I have some gradients here. This is a really thick acrylic yarn that wouldn't fit through any needle. So it's just couched down and it's not knotted on the back. You can see all those blue connecting marks, but the orange is just floating there on the top, but it's really attached down with lots and lots of couching stitches so it'll be fine. I wouldn't recommend doing that for something that you're gonna wear, but for something that's just meant to hang on the wall, totally fine. So that's really thick all

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the way down to something really, really thin. So this is a really thin bit of metallic embroidery thread that's just barely couched down. You can see it's couched down with green, but it's really hard to see 'cause the green is the same tone as the background. Another cool thing you can do with couching is tying the thread together at the end to make a line that's twice as thick, but it also gives you a bit of flexibility. So this was a bit of thread that was two threads thick, and then I opened it up at one point and part of it went one way and part of it went another, and then it came back together. So you can make these sort of tributaries that go apart and then come back together. Here's another example of a little sampler just on plain fabric that I whipped together. I think this is from an in-person workshop that I taught, and here's some more couching, just yarn that didn't go in a needle and this yarn probably would've fit through a needle. 213 00:09:15,420 --> 00:09:16,800 A tapestry needle would've totally accommodated this wool yarn, but it's kind of nice to have these ends out, kind of splayed out and makes a nice design element. This is another example of couching with really thick pearl cotton attached down with another shade of pearl cotton. And I wanted to show this to show how it looks if you have rows and rows of couching. So all the other examples are just one thin line of couching, but you can also use it right next to each other to make parallel rows of it, and it makes a really beautiful border. I think it would also be a really cool way to create text or to make an image appear on your fabric. Couching is a really great sort of thick line that you can use all different kinds of yarns and metallic threads or even things that don't necessarily fit through the needle to make a really bold mark on your fabric.

Danish knots
- It can be a lot of fun to love so big, but I find that also the tiniest things are the things that truly endear someone to us. So today's theme is, I love You this Tiny. I have a couple quilts to show, and then I'm going to share a technique that is very special to me in my baby quilt. My grandmother was the most skillful person who worked on the quilt, and it was her that organised the quilt, and she showed her love in a lot of the tiny details that she put into her blocks. Number one, she signed her whole name with her signature, Marian Montgomery. And the year 1982 on this block where the theme is the Letter U, she's highlighted this frog and like, what a cute little detail to go with the theme of an umbrella for the Letter U to have a frog out in the rain, she's used the blanket stitch to create a puddle and all these teeny tiny raindrops, they help to show the usefulness of the umbrella. I think that a quilt in itself is protective and sheltering in the same way that an umbrella is. And by showing all these tiny little raindrops that she's embroidered, it adds to the specialness and care and protective energy that's held in this block that my grandma made. And what makes it that chef's kiss detail is the tiny things. Another quilt that has a great tiny detail is the one that I just showed about love being big here on the edge. I used this beautiful vintage fabric that has different fruit assemblages with strawberries and apples and pears and grapes in it, and it had a hole in it. And rather than say, oh, that red fabric is too old, it already has a hole, maybe it won't be part of the quilt, I decided to put some care and thoughtfulness into the fabric. So I used a darning technique and wove vertically and horizontally to cover the hole that was in the fabric. I find details like this to be such special evidence of the maker. There are a lot of vintage quilts where maybe there's a block that's just two inches by one inch in a courthouse steps pattern, for example, and someone's taken the time to match a print and sew it together and piece two pieces of fabric to make that tiny little block those moments of care from a maker. Give me the feels and I, I always feel the love with those tiny details. This block based quilt is about my love of winter. It's 36 blocks, all unabashedly, adoring winter, and perhaps feeling frustrated in the summer. And this particular block is one that depicts a

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star or a moon at night and the winter sky. And I love this little tiny dot of applique in the bigness of, of the dark sky behind it. So this type of block can be really special to show how tiny can be really important and powerful. About two years ago, my friend Adriana Torres, who lives in Argentina, who I teach with sometimes on Zoom, taught me a new stitch. She taught me the Danish knot. And when I think of Adriana, I picture in my mind her saying, I love tiny stitches. And so I thought to connect with her in this block was very special and reminds me of that friendship and how a single tiny stitch can be really powerful. I'm gonna do a small row of the Danish knot to make the Danish knot. It's helpful to plan in advance and begin with a single stitch like a running stitch as the starting point for the knot. So here I'll do a row of four stitches going across cross, and now I can begin to turn these stitches into triangles. So here from my last running stitch, I'm gonna pop up and create a triangular shape. And now I like to form this knot by sending the eye side of the needle underneath my stitch and to the left of where my needle came out last. So here you can see the sharp pointy part of the needle is up, and I was easily able to slide the eye underneath the stitch. I'll pull that all the way through, and now I'll come again down the stitch eye side first. But this time I'm going to the right of the needle and I'm reaching through the belly of the thread, pulling that up. This creates a beautiful triangle shaped knot. From here, I'm going to go back into the same hole that I came out when I formed the tip of my triangle, and I'll repeat that for four stitches to the left and through to the right, through the belly of the knot This time, and then onward to the next tip of the triangle. It can be nice to think of a poetic number, like maybe there's a special significance of four. The thing that comes to my mind first is that I'm part of a family of four, so it's me and my brother and my parents. If I had a different number that was really significant, that could be special to choose. I was born on the 13th, so that's another relatively small number that I like. I hear this row of four Danish knots helps show off that beautiful triangle shape that they create. I'll close with a Taylor's knot, and this is the kind of block in a quilt that even though it didn't take a lot of time and there's not a whole lot of stitching, people zoom in and fawn over the tiny little detail in that block. Here's an example that I did with more stitches. I've got 36 Danish knots all together, which is still pretty tiny in the scope of the block and has that really detailed zoom-in look. And I'm noticing as I'm working on this quilt that yet again, the triangle is emerging as a shape that's showing up from the point of my arrow, the nose of my bunny, and now the triangle and the danish knot. So it's really special to see how sometimes things like that emerge as you're working, even though it's not a conscious thing that you're trying to put into the quilt.

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