

STEM / OUTLINE STITCH

LEFT-HANDED



1 These stitches are slightly wider and more textured than backstitch. For stem stitch, begin by bringing the needle to the front at the start of the line.



2 With the thread **below** the needle, insert the needle in the line to the left of where you came up and bring the point of the needle up halfway between them.



3 Start pulling the thread through.



4 The first stitch is complete when the loop is lying along the (imaginary) line on the fabric with the thread emerging at the top halfway along the stitch.



5 For the next stitch, insert the needle along the line to the left and bring the point up in the same hole as the end of the first stitch, still having the thread below the needle.



6 Pull the thread through to complete the second stitch. Continue in the same way to the end of the line. (The back of stem stitch should look like the front of backstitch.)



7 Outline stitch is the same as stem stitch but with the thread **above** the line. Bring the needle to the front at the start of the line.



8 Insert the needle to the left of the entry point and bring the point up halfway between them.



9 Pull the thread through to complete the first stitch. The thread should emerge halfway along below the stitch.



10 Continue forming stitches in the same way, keeping the thread above the line.



11 When you're working this stitch along a curve, keep the thread on the outside of the curve.



12 After making several stitches, you can see that the curve is smooth because each stitch is supported by the one that follows it.



13 Let's see what happens if you have the thread on the inside of the curve.



14 The stitches fall to the inside and look untidy. This is because the stitches drag on the previous ones, pulling them inwards instead of supporting them.



15 Stem or outline stitch can be stacked in close rows, straight or curved, to form a solid filling stitch. It can resemble long and short stitch, but is easier to work.



16 Remember to keep the thread on the outside of the curve so the stitches hold their shape.



17 A semicircle filled with rows of stem stitch.