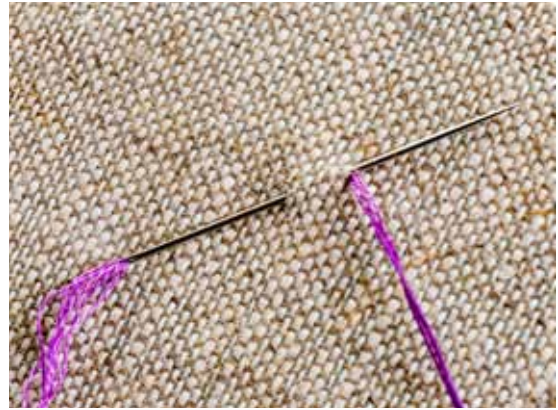


Bullion stitch

LEFT-HANDED



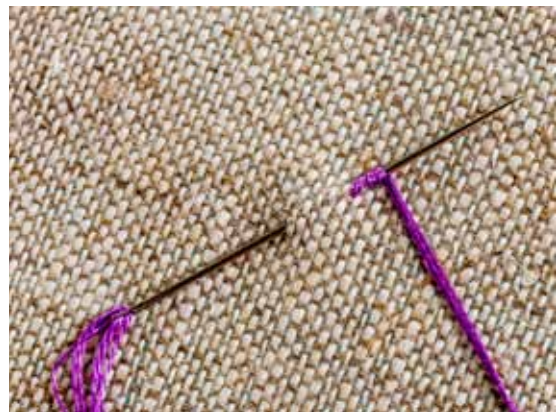
1 The most important step in bullion stitch is choosing the right needle. A milliner's (or straw) needle is extra long and has the eye the same diameter as the shaft.



2 Bring the needle to the front of the fabric at one end of the stitch and go down at the other. Bring the point of the needle up again at the start right beside the thread.



3 Wrap the thread a few times around the needle. You can wind clockwise or anticlockwise – either is correct – but they will give subtly different looks to the finished stitch.



4 After three or four winds, slide the wraps down the needle shaft to where it emerges from the fabric. This helps to keep even tension on the wraps.



5 Continue wrapping a few times and sliding the wraps down in turn until the wrapped section of the needle is the same length as the stitch.



6 To maintain the tension on the wraps as you pull the needle through them, put your right thumb on top and hold it gently until the needle and thread is pulled through.



7 This is the stitch after nearly all of the thread is pulled through. There's still a little way to go before the stitch sits nicely on the fabric.



8 Keep pulling the thread through until the stitch is lying on the fabric. If the wraps are a bit higgledy, stroke underneath them with the point of the needle.



9 To finish the stitch, insert the needle again at the end of the stitch.



10 The finished bullion stitch. This extreme close-up shot reveals that this stitch could have had one or two more wraps on the needle!



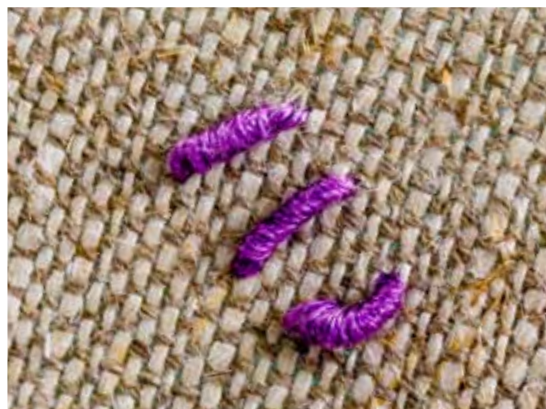
11 The second stitch is being made the same size as the first, but with the thread wrapped anticlockwise around the needle shaft this time.



12 In DMC Stranded Embroidery Cotton, there is a very subtle difference between the stitches, but with some threads it is marked. Sew two test stitches at the start.



13 Curved bullion stitches are very useful. To make a curved bullion stitch, you need the packed wraps on the needle to be longer than the stitch length.



14 Once you finish the stitch, its shape is curved. A stand-alone stitch can be made to curve either way, but they usually sit around other stitches.



15 To take this one step further, a bullion loop is made by having no length to the stitch (ie the entry and exit points are the same), but lots of wraps on the needle.



16 The finished stitch is a little looped bullion. You can couch it down to make a dimensional lazy daisy for example, or leave it standing up for texture.