



JUDGE ALONG AT THE KANSAS STATE FAIR COUNTED CROSS STITCH

What the judge looks for in Counted Cross Stitch:

- The number one thing judges are looking for is stitch execution.
- All stitches are crossed and in the same direction.
- Even backstitching
- Even stitches
- Even tension. No distortion to the ground fabric.
- No bulk or lumpy areas where threads have been started or ended.
- Even coverage, not too heavy or too sparse. No fuzzy threads.
- Quarter stitches, half stitches, and three quarter stitches are properly executed. Full, even, non-twisted stitches.
- Stitches started at the lower left of a vertical thread if the ground fabric is linen or an even weave fabric.



Some criteria will vary in the total effect on the score. The weight these areas carry is determined by the individual competition entered. These areas include:

- Overall technique and presentation. This area includes ground fabric appropriate for the design, design stitched on straight grain of fabric, color substitutions made correctly, no visible dirt spots or pet hairs, etc.
- Framing or finishing. Usually no more than 10% of your total score. However, in close competitions this can put a competitor out of the running.
- Difficulty of design.

**Give it a try and see how your placings
compare to the judge's (fill in the exhibitor's number):**

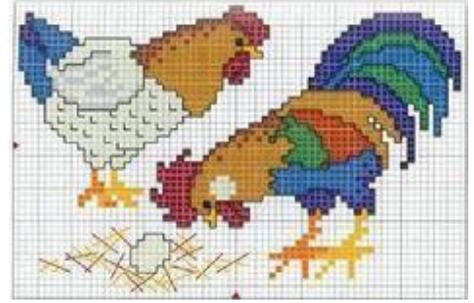
Your Choice

- 1st place
- 2nd place
- 3rd place

Judge's Decision

- 1st place
- 2nd place
- 3rd place

Counted cross stitch embroidery is a traditional type of embroidery that can be adapted to either simple or complex designs. Cross-stitch is the oldest form of embroidery and can be found all over the world. Cross stitch embroidery is worked exclusively using the basic cross stitch, although variations of the stitch are also used. Cross stitching can be worked on any fabric suitable for embroidery, but even weaves are the best suited.



Traditionally, cross-stitch was used to embellish items like household linens, tablecloths, dishcloths, and doilies (only a small portion of which would actually be embroidered, such as a border). Although there are many cross-stitchers who still employ it in this fashion, it is now increasingly popular to work the pattern on pieces of fabric and hang them on the wall for decoration.

Blackwork embroidery is a special category of counted thread embroidery in which a repetitive pattern is used to fill in the design area. It is called blackwork because it is traditionally done using black silk thread on white linen fabric. Blackwork is believed to have originated in Spain, and became very popular in England during the sixteenth century.

Assisi embroidery is a variation of basic cross stitching in which areas of the design are left open and the background is filled with basic cross stitches. The technique is named for the town in Italy where it originated. Traditionally only the one color of thread was used, but today's Assisi designs incorporate a variety of colors.



Draw your own counted cross stitch pattern below.