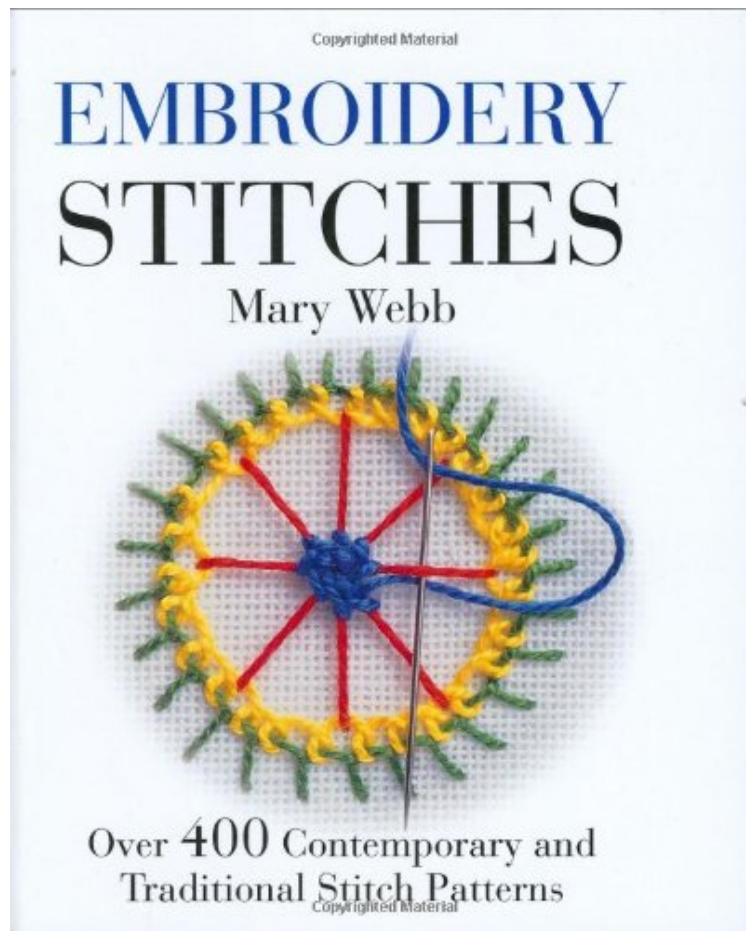


# Embroidery Stitches: Over 400 Contemporary and Traditional Stitch Patterns

Mary Webb

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**Mary Webb : Embroidery Stitches: Over 400 Contemporary and Traditional Stitch Patterns** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Embroidery Stitches: Over 400 Contemporary and Traditional Stitch Patterns:

15 of 15 people found the following review helpful. Pretty pictures but needs more detailBy R KirkBefore I purchased this book, I was hoping for some detailed instructions on embroidery stitches. The book has some detail, but not enough. The most basic stitches are detailed, but then when the patterns get more involved the visual step-by-step instructions disappear and there is only the written instructions with a picture of the stitch, and unless you are very familiar with embroidery jargon, you could get lost. I was wanting to duplicate the embroidery stitch on the front cover and the instructions just weren't explicit enough, so I had to stare at the picture to figure out how the pattern was accomplished. It would also be more helpful if the book had some sort of index. You have to go page by page to find the pattern you want. For instance, I just wanted to find out what a whipped back stitch was, and I had to go through

the pages one at a time to find the diagram. I don't recommend this one for beginners unless you can figure out how to do something by looking at the pretty pictures. 8 of 9 people found the following review helpful. good reference, not a beginner's manual

By Sarah Danks I absolutely agree with the other reviewers who've already said they would not recommend this book for an inexperienced beginner. Although an advanced or adventurous beginner could find it useful, I think it would depend on your style of learning. It is a good reference, with pictures of the completed stitches, alternate names for stitches, and a number of stitches that I've not encountered before. It is not the ideal book on embroidery, but I've not found that yet. ;-)

I also agree that the format is too small. Because the pages are so small, the pictures are limited. Most stitches have only one photograph showing several completed stitches and one or two partial stitches. If you are an experienced stitcher, that might be enough to figure it out, but it likely won't work for many beginners. Also, the text is in a 10 point sanserif typeface that appears smaller than it actually is. A larger, serifed font would have been more readable. I will say, though, that the binding is quite good, and the book lays fairly flat even considering how thick it is.

At the beginning is a section on materials, tools, basic techniques, etc. which is rudimentary at best and will not teach you how to stitch or how to choose your tools and materials. It might give you a tip or two, but don't count on it. This really is a "stitch dictionary" not a book on how to embroider. The stitches are divided into Basic, Fabric, and Canvas stitches. A number of the Basic stitches have drawings that include needle and thread forming the stitch, which is definitely useful for beginners. I wouldn't get too hung up on the distinction between "Fabric" and "Canvas" if you are working on evenweave linen since a lot of what used to be strictly needlepoint/canvas stitches are now being used as "specialty stitches" in cross stitch samplers. If you are doing crazy quilt, there are some stitches in the canvas section that could add some interesting dimension to your work, too, though you might have to add some extra backing to your ground fabric to prevent distortion. The stitches within a section are grouped according to whether they would be used to make a line, make a border, fill an area, or are detached, motif, isolated, hemming, etc. Each grouping is then separated into Easy, Medium and Hard. This means you can browse a section to find a fill stitch, for instance, or, if you know the name of the stitch, you can just look it up in the index. All ordering systems for stitches are arbitrary, and this one makes more sense than some I've seen. However, if you are looking for the starting page of any group, you have to check the front table of contents to see where the Fabric or Canvas stitches begin, then check that page for a secondary table of contents on just that section. I don't happen to like that layout for the table of contents, but it is usable. The text accompanying each stitch gives guidelines for usage, whether a line stitch will curve or not, what type of ground fabric to use, and what type of thread would work best or show off the stitch to best effect. Some stitches also have some historical or regional information. Considering how embroidery flowed from region to region over the centuries, I consider that a bonus. The pictures of the stitches are well photographed and, in most cases, large enough to show the stitch clearly. Many stitches have only one photo, and I could wish for more "how to" photos on some of them. The French knot, for instance, has a nice photo of how different groupings and spacings of French knots can look, but there is only text to tell you how to make one. Personally I find photos and drawings much easier to follow than text. That said, I have to admit that I am comparing this book's photos to those in Sue Gardner/Country Bumpkin's "A to Z of Embroidery Stitches," which I would highly recommend to any beginner for the excellent step-by-step photos, even though it doesn't have nearly the number of stitches that are included in this book. This book does not have every stitch in it, of course, and is even missing one or two that I would have expected to see: i.e., Colonial knot. However, there are many stitches that I know and have used and quite a few unfamiliar ones. With 400 stitches in the book, I'd have been disappointed if there hadn't been some that are new to me. Largely, the new ones are just a matter of variations on a stitch or combinations of simpler stitches. That doesn't mean that you can't learn something new from them. One stitch I didn't know is the "Chinese knot" which is similar to the French knot, so I tried it out. Frankly, the Chinese knot is formed exactly the way I would make a French knot if I were stitching with my left hand. It can be done right-handed easily enough, but you will have to work it out for yourself as the text is not explicit about forming it. I compared a group of French and Chinese knots and realized that the author's claim that the Chinese knot lies a little flatter and has a better shape is absolutely correct. Flatter will cover better when you are using it for a fill (Theresa Layman miniatures!!!) and a nicer shape is good for larger threads when you can really see the stitch. All in all, I'm well pleased with the book. I've been embroidering, crocheting, knitting, tatting, and sewing since I was 8 -- which is now over half a century -- and I keep adding to my collection of reference books and patterns whenever I find something that looks useful or inspiring. I took a star off for minimal "how to" photos and less than ideal font and book size, but this book is definitely useful and a good addition to my collection.

1 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Great Book - But

By Pauline Eikel I just recently received this book from .com and have not spent a great amount of time studying it yet but I have to say I was disappointed in the printed size of the book. I agree with one of the other reviewers that it seems that things are rather crammed together (because of the size of the book). But my biggest complaint is that since I intend to use this book to study these stitches and to duplicate them, over and over, until I feel I really know them, WHY WAS THIS BOOK NOT PRINTED AS A SPIRAL BOUND - STAND-UP BOOK? Nothing fancy - just like a stenographer's note book - spiral at the top with a ribbon or something I could attach to keep it a tripod. Even the size of a steno book would have made it better. If this is ever printed as I mention above, I would probably buy another copy of the book. It is really

excellent to have so many stitches printed all together in one place but it is also true that you have to keep going back to the index to find where the stitch you are looking for is located. I don't know what you can do about that though. I like the way she used canvas to show the stitches and that she used bright colors to show each step in the stitch process. Great book just two flaws really and they can be corrected by printing binding.

The most exhaustive reference guide to embroidery stitches ever published. In a small format for easy portability, this book contains detailed information on more than 400 embroidery stitches-easily more than twice as many as found in earlier books. From the basic to the more intricate and from traditional to contemporary, each embroidery stitch is demonstrated through clear, colorful illustrations and detailed, easy-to-follow instructions. Stitches are grouped according to type, making it easy to locate a specific stitch, and presented in order of difficulty, from beginner to advanced. The stitches are further divided into fabric stitches and canvas stitches, and include: Line and border stitches Straight and slanted stitches Filling and detached stitches Composite and isolated stitches Crossed and insertion stitches Edging and hem stitches Motif stitches Single- and double-canvas stitches Plain- and even-weave fabric stitches. This book is the perfect handbook for the relaxing and enduring hobby of embroidery.

About the Author Mary Webb is a professional needlecraft and textiles designer. She studied embroidery, knitting and textile design at a London college, where she now teaches. Her designs have been published in a number of magazines in the UK, and she has written widely on a range of knitting and needlecraft topics.