FREE EMBROIDERY TUTORIAL + PATTERN

Chain Stitch Embroidery

How to chain stitch, a thread guide and a rainbow pattern for a 5 in hoop

SKILL LEVEL **Beginner**	HOOP **5 in**	DESIGN **6-colour rainbow + clouds**
FLOSS **DMC, 7 colours**	STITCH **Chain stitch only**	TIME **About 3 hours**

Materials

- DMC stranded cotton: DMC 321, DMC 740, DMC 973, DMC 702, DMC 798, DMC 553, DMC 3865 (1 skein each)
- 8 × 8 in oatmeal linen or cotton, a 5 in hoop, a size 7 embroidery needle, a water-soluble pen

Key

1 needle comes up
down at 1 same hole, leave a loop
2 up inside the loop, 1 stitch along
3 strands separate 3 of the 6

Keep each stitch about 3 mm long and pull every loop to the same snugness: even loops make the rows look smooth.

Chain stitch

1	Come up at the start of the line.
2	Go down in the same hole, leaving a small loop.
3	Come up one stitch length along the line, inside the loop.
4	Pull until the loop lies flat. Repeat from 2.
5	End with a tiny tacking stitch over the last loop.

The rainbow

Clouds	DMC 3865 winter white: stitch the traced outline, then a second row just inside it.	**(112 sts)**
Band 1	DMC 321 red: 2 rows, outer row first, each from cloud to cloud.	**(55 sts)**
Band 2	DMC 740 orange: 2 rows, outer row first, each from cloud to cloud.	**(41 sts)**
Band 3	DMC 973 yellow: 2 rows, outer row first, each from cloud to cloud.	**(30 sts)**
Band 4	DMC 702 green: 2 rows, outer row first, each from cloud to cloud.	**(23 sts)**
Band 5	DMC 798 blue: 2 rows, outer row first, each from cloud to cloud.	**(18 sts)**
Band 6	DMC 553 purple: 2 rows, outer row first, each from cloud to cloud.	**(10 sts)**
Finish	Rinse out the pen, press face down on a towel and frame in the hoop.	

How to Do Chain Stitch Embroidery

3 strands · stitches about 3 mm long · each loop holds the next one

1 · Come up



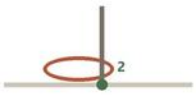
Bring the needle up at the start of the line (1).

2 · Down in the same hole



Go back down at 1 but don't pull tight: leave a small loop on top.

3 · Up inside the loop



Come up at 2, one stitch length along the line, inside the loop.

4 · Pull snug



Pull until the loop lies flat round the thread. One chain made.

5 · Repeat, then tack



Go down at 2 inside the last loop and repeat. End with a tiny stitch over the last loop.

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Chain Stitch Guide

Typical sizes with DMC stranded cotton and a size 7 embroidery needle

Thread	Row width	Stitch length	Good for
2 strands	about 1.5 mm	2–3 mm	fine lines, lettering
3 strands	about 2 mm	3 mm	outlines, rainbow rows
6 strands	about 3 mm	4–5 mm	bold lines, filling
Perle cotton #8	about 2.5 mm	4 mm	raised, shiny lines

On tight curves, shorten the stitches: smaller loops follow the line without corners.

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Chain Stitch Rainbow · Stitch Plan

Every row to scale, enlarged · 12 rainbow rows + 4 cloud rows · 3 strands



- DMC 321 red · 2 rows
- DMC 740 orange · 2 rows
- DMC 973 yellow · 2 rows
- DMC 702 green · 2 rows
- DMC 798 blue · 2 rows
- DMC 553 purple · 2 rows
- DMC 3865 winter white · 4 rows

Stitch the clouds first, then each band outer row first. White dots = where one chain ends and the next begins.

Chain Stitch Rainbow · Floss

3 mm stitches · about 3.2 in of thread per inch of chain stitch · 3 strands

DMC	Colour	Rows	Stitches	Stitched length	Thread (3 strands)
DMC 321	red	2	55	6.6 in	0.9 yd
DMC 740	orange	2	41	4.8 in	0.7 yd
DMC 973	yellow	2	30	3.6 in	0.5 yd
DMC 702	green	2	23	2.8 in	0.4 yd
DMC 798	blue	2	18	2.1 in	0.3 yd
DMC 553	purple	2	10	1.2 in	0.2 yd
DMC 3865	winter white	4	112	13.6 in	1.7 yd

One skein of each colour is plenty. Fabric: oatmeal linen or cotton, 8 × 8 in. Time: about 3 hours.

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Chain Stitch Rainbow · print at 100% (actual size)

Trace the 12 rainbow lines and the 2 cloud outlines onto an 8 × 8 in piece of fabric. Stitch along each line in a 5 in hoop.



grey circle = inside of a 5 in hoop (don't trace it) · the inner cloud row sits 1 row inside the traced outline

Bands, outside to inside (2 rows each):

1. **DMC 321 red**
2. **DMC 740 orange**
3. **DMC 973 yellow**
4. **DMC 702 green**
5. **DMC 798 blue**
6. **DMC 553 purple**

Clouds: DMC 3865 winter white

1 in check bar: measure it after printing