FREE EMBROIDERY TUTORIAL + PATTERN

Split Stitch Embroidery

How to split stitch, outline and fill, plus an olive branch pattern for a 5 in hoop

SKILL LEVEL	HOOP	DESIGN
Beginner	**5 in**	**Olive branch**
FLOSS	**STITCH**	**TIME**
DMC 3363, 3364, 3011	**Split stitch only**	**About 4–5 hours**

Materials

- DMC stranded cotton: 3363, 3364, 3011 (1 skein each)
- 8 × 8 in natural linen, a 5 in hoop, a size 7 embroidery needle, a water-soluble pen

Key

split come up through the middle of the last stitch **row** one line of split stitch
2 strands separate 2 of the 6

Stitches are 0.1 in (2.5 mm) long; fill rows sit 0.04 in (1.0 mm) apart.

Split stitch

1	Come up at the start, go down one stitch length along the line.
2	Come up through the middle of that stitch, splitting the strands.
3	Go down one stitch length further on. Repeat.

The olive branch

Trace	Print the template at 100%, check the 1 in bar, trace the stem, leaves, stalks and olives.
Stem	DMC 3363: split stitch along the stem and the olive stalks.
Leaves	Centre row in DMC 3363, then rows either side in DMC 3364, each touching the last, until the leaf is full.
Olives	DMC 3011: rows along the olive, centre row first. **(30 sts)**
Finish	Rinse out the pen, dry face down on a towel, press and frame.

How to Do Split Stitch

Use an even number of strands (2 or 4) so the needle can split them evenly

1 · First stitch

Come up at the start of the line and go down one stitch length (2.5 mm) along it.

2 · Split it

Come up through the MIDDLE of that stitch, splitting the strands in two.

3 · Next stitch

Go down one stitch length further on. The new stitch starts inside the last one.

4 · Keep going

Repeat: up through the middle of the last stitch, down one length on. It looks like a tiny chain.

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Split Stitch vs Stem, Back and Chain Stitch

Four line stitches beginners learn first

Stitch	How the next stitch starts	Looks like / best for
Split stitch	up through the middle of the last stitch	fine, flat chain-like line; outlines under satin; fills
Stem stitch	up just beside the last stitch	rope-like twisted line; stems, lettering
Backstitch	down into the end of the last stitch	dotted, crisp line; lettering, details
Chain stitch	loops held by the next loop	wide, bold line; fills

Filling with split stitch: work rows side by side, each touching the last. Follow the shape so the rows add direction and shine.

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Olive Branch · Split Stitch Plan

5 in hoop · 360 split stitches in rows · 2 strands · drawn to scale, enlarged



DMC 3363 · stem + centre rows

DMC 3364 · leaf rows

DMC 3011 · olives

White dots = where each stitch splits the one before. Stitch the stem first, then each leaf from its centre row out.

Olive Branch · Floss

2 strands · stitches 2.5 mm long

DMC	Colour	Part	Stitches	Thread (2 strands)
DMC 3363	medium pine green	stem, stalks, leaf centre rows	83	0.8 yd
DMC 3364	pine green	leaf side rows	247	2.1 yd
DMC 3011	dark khaki green	olives	30	0.3 yd

One skein of each colour is plenty. Fabric: 8 × 8 in natural linen in a 5 in hoop. Time: about 4–5 hours.

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Olive Branch · print at 100% (actual size)

Trace the stem, the leaf outlines and the olives onto an 8 × 8 in piece of linen. Stitch in a 5 in hoop.



thin grey line in each leaf = the centre row (dark green) · outer circle = inside of the hoop

1 in check bar: measure it after printing