



Ann's Orchard Needlework

Little Beaded Valentine Heart

Ingredients

- * 12cm embroidery hoop
- * Small piece coloured linen
- * Size 11 seed beads TOHO 2100
- * Beading needle
- * Sewing needle
- * Sewing thread
- * Scissors
- * Heart template
- * Pen
- * Mount board

Approximate time: 3 hours



Whilst eating breakfast yesterday morning I thought a little beaded heart would make a lovely quick project just in time for the special day.....

1. Prepare the Fabric

I am a great hoarder of fabric, you simply never know when it can come in use and there is always space for another exquisite scrap. The fabric I used for this project was a lovely piece of Designer's Guild linen from an old sample book. If you want to use a lighter weight fabric it might be worth adding some interfacing to the back to give sufficient strength to hold the beads. Prepare a paper template of the shape you wish to embroider. I chose a 6cm heart from PowerPoint, printed it on a sheet of paper, cut it out and traced around the edge onto the fabric. Alternatively, cookie cutters often make great templates. Place your fabric in the embroidery hoop, taking care to make sure it is centred and the screw sits at the top, before tightening to hold the fabric in place.

2. Stitching the Design

Using the fine beading needle and a double strand of sewing thread stitch a band of seed beads along the outer edge of the design, covering the pen line. Simply pop a single bead on the needle as you make each stitch. Stitching at 2mm to 3mm should ensure the beads sit quite tightly together.

Once the outer bead line is complete fill the space around the heart. Work the beads quite densely close to the shape and gradually space them out as you work towards the edge of the embroidery frame. It is quite a random process and you can always add extra beads at the end to even up the distribution.



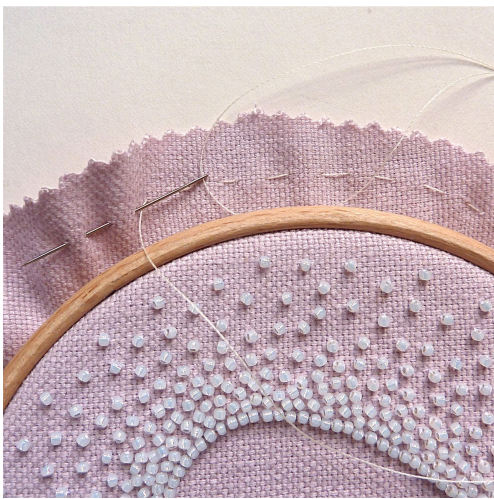
3. Trimming the Fabric

Once you are happy with your beaded embroidery trim the fabric to leave a margin of approximately 2cm around the embroidery frame. If you have pinking shears then it will help prevent fraying but this is not essential.



4. Finishing the Needlework

Using a heavy duty sewing thread or a double strand of normal sewing thread hand stitch a line of running stitches around the outer margin approximately 1cm from the embroidery hoop. Pull the thread tightly to gather the fabric within the hoop and fasten off to hold in place. To finish, cut a circle of mount board to the same size as the embroidery hoop and glue to the back hiding the excess fabric. Add a ribbon to the top of the hoop for hanging.



Other Ideas

As an alternative to seed beads it would be equally effective to work the design in embroidery thread using French knots or seed stitches.

Use alternative templates for other occasions – a rabbit on moss green linen for Easter, a rattle on pink or blue for a new baby or holly on red linen for Christmas.

For a wedding the inclusion of the bride and grooms' initials in the centre would make a lovely keepsake.