

Gridding

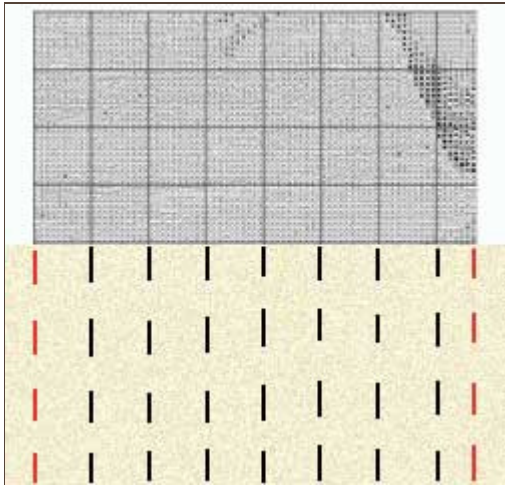
A Scarlet Quince™ Tutorial

Gridding involves copying some or all of the lines on the chart to your fabric. This makes it easier to keep your place and saves time by reducing the amount of counting you have to do. There are three basic variables: what lines to grid, what to use to mark the fabric, and when to do the marking.

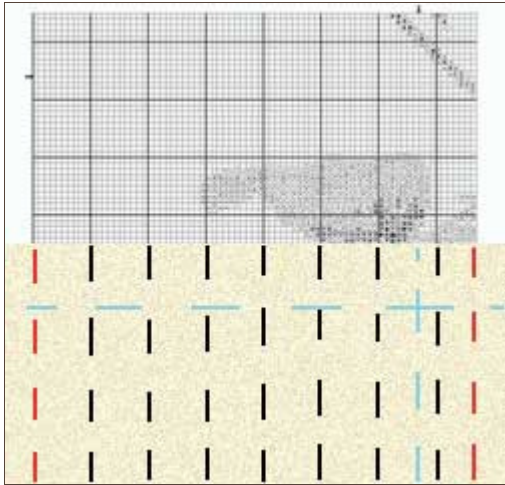
1. What lines to grid: you can mark page boundaries only, or include the bold "tens" lines in the pattern. You may grid vertical lines only, or vertical and horizontal. You may also mark the lines that pass through the center point.



1a. If the picture is easy to see in the chart (for example, if the objects in the picture are fairly small and contrast strongly with the background), you may only need to mark page boundaries. If you stitch top to bottom, and don't skip around too much, you won't need to mark the bottoms of the pages -- just the sides.



1b. If there is a lot of background, or the objects in the picture are indistinct on the chart, you will also need to grid the tens lines. You can grid just the vertical lines if you don't leave vertical gaps in your stitching (that is, each stitch you make is under a previously completed stitch). If you like to follow a color as far as you can, jumping around, you should grid the horizontal tens lines too.



1c. For patterns in which the background is not stitched (or if you just like to start in the center), it may also be helpful to mark vertical and horizontal lines that go through the center point of the chart.

2. What to use to mark the fabric: you can mark with a fabric marking pen, or stitch the grid into the fabric.



2a. To mark with a pen, look for a fabric marking pen marked washable or water soluble. These are usually but not always light blue. (There is a type of "vanishing" or "air erasable" pencil, usually purple, that disappears in about 24 hours. Avoid those. Chalk pencils are OK but the marks may not stand up to prolonged stitching.) If you make a mistake gridding, you can

dab the lines with a damp cloth to remove the marks. Don't use a pen to grid if your floss is not washable, since you should wash the marks out when you have finished your project.

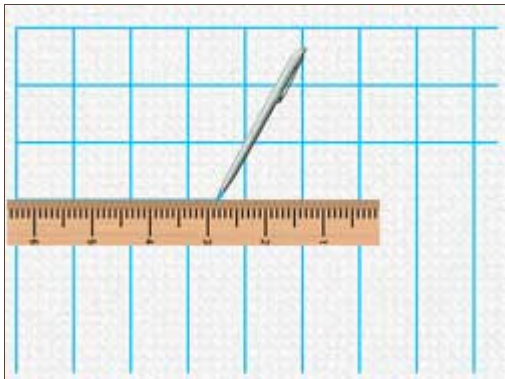


2b. You can stitch the grid into the fabric using sewing thread (cotton or cotton-polyester). (Embroidery floss is always at hand but tends to shred slightly when pulled out.) Make the stitches the length of 2-5 cross stitches. Remove the grid threads as you stitch up to to them. If you pierce the grid thread with a cross stitch, you won't be able to get the grid thread out.

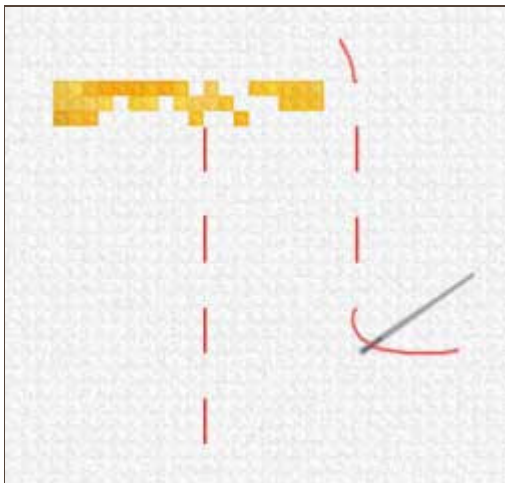


2c. A product made for gridding is Easy-Count Guideline. It's a red monofilament plastic thread (much like fishing line) and can be stitched over since it's not possible to pierce it with the needle. It includes instructions for use, but briefly, you're supposed to grid the whole fabric, do all your stitching, then pull it out. There are other non-spun plastics (such as Sulky Sliver) but they are typically not strong enough to pull out from under stitching. Or you could use red fishing line.

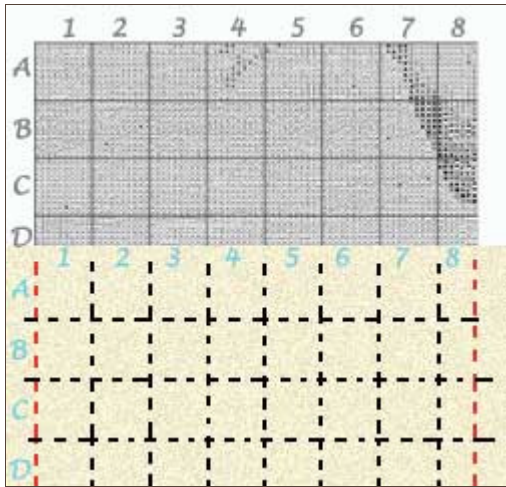
3. You can do all the gridding in advance, or if you are anxious to get stitching (aren't you?) you can put it in as you go.



3a. If you are using a marking pen, you should do it up front so you can have the fabric on a flat surface and use a ruler.

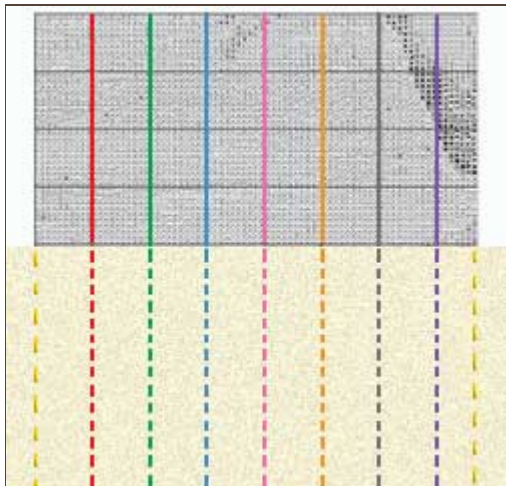


3b. If you are stitching your grid, you can add the lines of basting on the fabric as you come to them on the chart. Here, if you were looking at the chart, you'd see that you were two stitches away from the tens line, so you only need to count to two to put in the next grid line.



4. You may find it helpful to label the tens squares on the chart and fabric. Mark the squares going across 1, 2, 3 and the squares going down A, B, C.

5. If you are stitching a complex pattern, we highly recommend using different colors for the grid lines (which requires gridding with thread). This saves further counting -- for example, instead of counting over 5 lines, you just look for the square bordered by rose and orange.



5a. Grid each tenth line with a different color of thread, using colors that contrast strongly with the fabric, and color the lines on the chart to match, using a fine-pointed felt-tip marker (like a Sharpie). Grid the page boundaries with a metallic thread or a heavy thread like Pearl cotton so that they stand out from the colored thread lines.



5b. If possible, put the colors in a different order on each page. This serves as an additional check that you are on the right page -- if you are looking for a spot between the green and blue lines, it helps if there is only one page on which the green line is immediately to the left of the blue line.