

Square Stitch

When completed, square stitch looks similar to loom weave. Unlike brick stitch or peyote stitch, which has the beads arranged in a pattern resembling stacked bricks with only one vertical or horizontal straight line of beads, square stitch has the beads directly above, below and side by side. This allows for both vertical and horizontal straight lines. Best of all when completed, only a single beading thread remains to be worked into the piece instead of several associated with loom work.

The beads in square stitch are slightly tilted, similar to a nap. This is caused by the way the thread loops around the beads. All work should be done in ONE direction (left to right or right to left). If worked in different directions, the beads will tilt two different ways. It is important to keep an even tension and straight top and bottom edges.

Unlike brick and peyote stitch, the thread between the beads will show in square stitch. This makes choosing the thread color a little more important. Be careful of dark color threads, as they tend to dull light colors and transparent beads. Although a dark tan thread in portrait beading works well for blending the flesh colors.

1. Start with a section of thread approximately two yards in length. Loosely tie a single bead about 10 inches from the end as a "stop bead" (fig. 18). This bead is mainly to keep the other beads from sliding off the end of the thread. It will be removed later and the thread will be worked into the piece.
2. String the amount of beads listed for the base row.
3. To start next row, pick up a bead and go up last bead strung, down through bead added. Pull beads together. This bead will be the first bead of the next row. All beads are connected side by side (fig. 18).
4. Pick up another bead, go up second to the last bead strung, down through the bead added and pull beads together (fig. 19).
5. Repeat until all originally strung beads have a bead next to them, turn.
 - Important in square stitch, a row can not be increased without a bead to connect to. As shown in (fig. 22), the third row could not be increased until the fourth row was added.

Increasing

1. To increase a row on one end of a design, add the amount of beads needed for the increase plus one. In the example to the left, the row is being increased by one bead; therefore you would need to add two beads. The extra bead will be the first bead of the next row. Attach the bead in the same fashion as explained earlier and also shown in (fig. 20).
2. Pick up second bead and attach. Continue to end of row (fig. 21).
3. To increase a row of beads on other end, add amount of beads needed for increase plus one (as before). In the example to the right, the previous row and current row is being increased by one bead each. Increase the row at this end before moving on to the next row (fig. 22).
4. In the example to the right, the previous and current row are being increased by two beads (fig. 23). Continue adding beads as shown, until the space(s) between the increase are filled.

5. When last bead is in place, go through last bead of original piece of work and out beads of the increased row. This secures the increased section to main part of design (fig. 23). Continue with next row.

Decreasing

To decrease the next row, go down through the previous row, exit bead on the last row completed where you wish to start new row . Continue with next row.

Adding Thread and Tying Off

A knot is not necessary. Weave in the end of the thread by zig zagging through the rows. It is best to do this on the backside of the work to keep the extra thread from showing. For an added security, you may wish to use a dab of clear fingernail polish on the last bit of thread pulled into the piece before cut off.

Connecting Front to Back

To connect front and back together down the side, use same stitch using beads already there. Go down through the first bead on the back, up through the first bead on the front, down two beads in the back and pull together. Repeat to the bottom and weave in the end of the thread as described above. Stitch bottom of purse together.

(fig. 24)

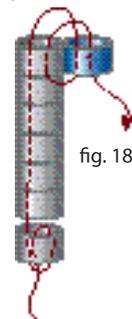


fig. 18

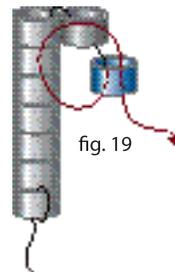


fig. 19

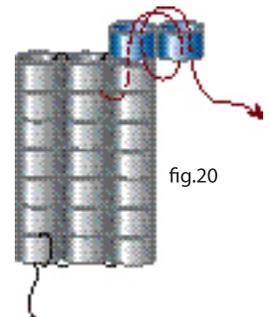


fig. 20

fig. 21

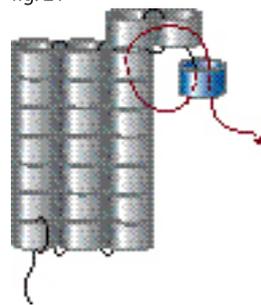


fig. 23

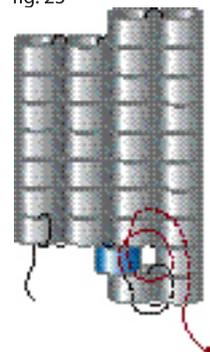


fig. 22



fig. 24

