



Line – Using stitch techniques on knitted fabrics – Tasks

Objective

In these tasks you will be exploring how duplicate stitch (Swiss darning) and similar stitching techniques can be used to develop designs, focusing in particular on the use of stitching to create lines.

Task One

For this exercise you will be exploring the use of duplicate stitch and how it can be used to develop a sketch, image or design.

1. Select one of your samples of line and mark-making from your work in the design module (module 1).
2. Using knitters' graph paper mark out a grid 40 sts wide and 30 rows high. Using a pen or pencil, lightly sketch the key lines and marks represented in your paper sample. You needn't capture every detail, the aim is to recreate the essence of your paper designs.
3. Each square of your grid represents a stitch. Fill each square that contains a line or mark with a • (dot). If you are using multiple colours, use a different colour to represent the colour scheme.
4. Choose a yarn of any colour in double knitting (worsted) weight.
5. Using 4mm needles (old UK 8, US 6) cast on 40 sts using your preferred cast on technique and knit a sample swatch in stocking stitch (stockinette).
6. Cast off, block and finish your swatch by sewing in any ends.
7. Working according to the chart you have just made, reproduce your chart using duplicate stitch.
8. When you have completed your sample, cast off. Block your sample again and weave in any ends.

Task Two

For this second exercise you will be using other stitch techniques to create lines and marks on your knitted fabric. These can be representational, abstract or a combination. Use a range of stitches or a single stitch and see how this affects the outcome.

1. Select a different sample of line and mark-making from your work in the design module (module 1).
2. Using knitters' graph paper mark out a grid 40 sts wide and 30 rows high. Using a pen or pencil, lightly sketch the key lines and marks represented in your paper sample. You needn't capture every detail, the aim is to recreate the essence of your paper designs.
3. Each square of your grid represents a stitch. Fill each square that contains a line or mark with a • (dot). If you are using multiple colours, use a different colour to represent the colour scheme.
4. Choose a yarn of any colour in double knitting (worsted) weight.
5. Using 4mm needles (old UK 8, US 6) cast on 40 sts using your preferred cast on technique and knit a sample swatch in stocking stitch (stockinette).

6. Cast off, block and finish your swatch by sewing in any ends.
7. Use your chart as a guide and add simple stitches such as backstitch and oversewing (see the reference section on making up for details) to create designs on the surface of your knitted fabric. If you wish you can explore other stitches used frequently in embroidery or tapestry. Look for stitches in embroiderers' stitch dictionaries or online (or make up your own).
8. When you have completed your sample, cast off. Block your sample again and weave in any ends. For this final sample you will be creating a 3-d shape from your swatch using stitch to sculpt the shape of the fabric.

Task Three

1. Choose a yarn of any colour in double knitting (worsted) weight.
2. Using 4mm needles (old UK 8, US 6) cast on 40 sts using your preferred cast on technique and knit a square sample swatch in stocking stitch (stockinette).
3. Cast off, block and finish your swatch by sewing in any ends.
4. Using the same or a different yarn, several yarns or yarn of a different fibre/texture, thread the yarn/s onto a knitters' sewing needle (bodkin or tapestry needle).
5. Manipulate the fabric by stitching into it. You may want to create pleats, waves, puffs, folds – play and be creative!
6. If you have time, repeat this with another sample swatch. Perhaps join the samples together, work them together or use the same yarns in different ways.
7. The aim of this exercise is to encourage you to really play with the knitted fabric and see what it can do!

Task Four

Reflect and record

Review your samples and make brief notes on how successful you think the techniques were in developing your initial design from your sketchbook into a resolved sample. Were there other stitches you could explore? Are there ways in which you might like to use this technique in your work? Do you see any opportunities for combining these techniques with others you have studied so far?