

STITCHING BOOK CLUB



February 2024

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What's In the Hoop?

What a great time to revisit one of our most romantic stitches!

The “Pride and Prejudice Mini” pattern is one of my absolute favorite designs. It has all the charm of the Full pattern, but in an easy and cute size.

I’m still enamored with the colors on this one and if you look closely at the website announcement page, you might see that the border from this design has found a new purpose in Stitching Book Club!

The Pride and Prejudice Full and Mini patterns are 40% of during the month of February!

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A MESSAGE FROM YOUR HOST

Ah, the season of love!

Now, I'm a single lady (♪put your hands up!♪), but an entire season of pink aesthetics? Yes, please! If it hasn't become apparent yet, I just love holidays. Any chance to decorate is something that I'm going to celebrate, and this month's freebie might be my favorite one yet!

I hope you all have had a lovely start to this year. I have been a woman obsessed trying to get all the final touches for the new website perfected. It's so close! The website itself is about 99% done. I've been spending the majority of my time getting all the new merchandise prepped and trying to convince my brain to stop coming up with even more new ideas that I can't seem to not pursue. I am so excited y'all! I really hope that you will love what I've created as much as I do.

I have picked March 9 as the official opening date. Yay! I will be sending out a larger preview of what will be available in my shop, but you can get a sneak peek in this newsletter.

If you go to my Etsy shop, you may notice that some things have already changed. The shop is now titled "Stitching Book Club". While Sapphire Mountain Handcrafts will remain my business name, I'm working to get everything more streamlined under the Stitching Book Club title because I know things get confusing for everyone with my two-name system. All of the old web links for SapphireMtHandcrafts still work, and you can even type sapphiremthandcrafts.etsy.com into your browser and it will direct you to the new shop. Please note that for the time being, my email address is still sapphiremthandcrafts@gmail.com. See what I mean about confusing?! I promise, I'm making it better! Until then, I thank you so much for hanging in here with me while all of this is going on.

I'm hoping to get back to social media soon—I know it's been such a dry spell for me. And dare I say you might even see me on Flosstube soon? Anyway, there's so much going on and I can't believe that I'm almost at the end of it. As always, thank you, thank you, thank you to all of you! To those of you who have reached out and given me words of encouragement, I can't tell you how much I appreciated it. I know I'm absolutely terrible at communicating, but I want you all to know that your generosity and love means so much to me. So, this is my Valentine to you. Mr. Darcy ain't go nothing on you! I'm wishing you all the love and joy this month and I will be seeing you all soon!



My sweet, little, at-times-pesky Valentine.

Happy stitching! Love, Kristin Ashley

There are so many shades of pink that work great for the Valentine's season, but I love the vibrance of DMC 956 - Geranium.

While subtlety can be nice for everyday décor, I think it's nice to have holiday decorations that stand out! So, I went with these beautiful bright colors for the freebie this month.

Geranium is the perfect vibrant pink that can easily be toned down with lighter tones or played up with even brighter ones.

Color of the Month

“Geranium”

DMC 956



NEW PATTERN IN SHOP

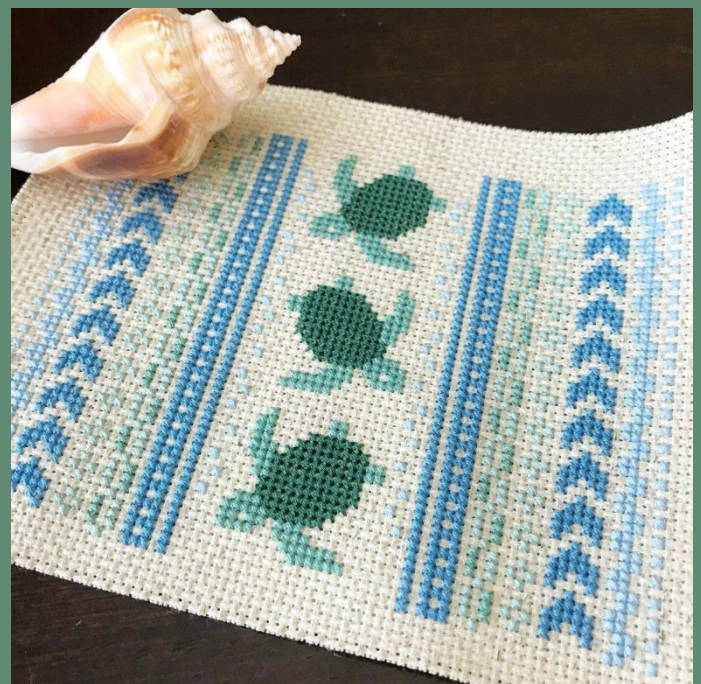
There is a new pattern listed in my shop!

“In the Current” is actually not a “new” pattern. This one goes all the way back to 2019. I created this pattern as a part of a charity fundraiser for the aftermath of Hurricane Dorian and its devastation in the Bahamas. 100% of proceeds went to the American Red Cross.

I recently had someone reach out to me after seeing this pattern in an old Flosstube video from another stitcher and was wondering if the pattern could be made available again. So, here it is!

If you didn't get a chance to snag this pattern when it was originally released, this cute little design is a quick, fun stitch that I'm happy to have back in the collection.

Please note, this is no longer a charity pattern, and all sales are for profit, not donation.

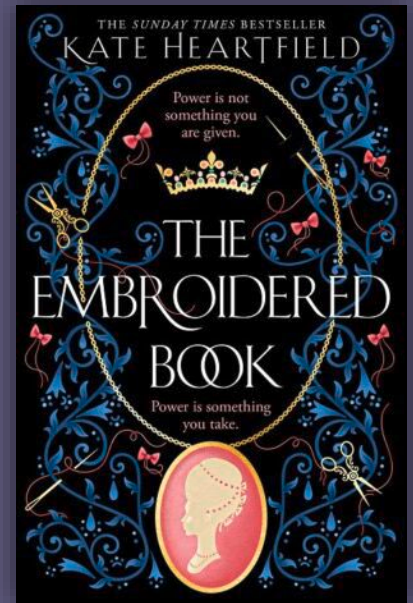


BOOK REVIEW

Let me start by admitting that I am not off to a very good start with my reading list for the year as I only made it through about half of this book during January. I was simply too busy to keep up with nightly reading.

As it is, I am struggling with this book. I have found it to be quite dry. I want to love it, I really do! I love fantasy and all things Marie Antoinette, so I thought for sure this would be a hit, but the narration is so distant. I don't feel any real connection to the two main characters. It reads very much like a work of non-fiction, which I can appreciate and enjoy, but this is meant to be fantastical history, and the distant narration is keeping me from getting invested.

I do intend to finish the novel, but I don't see it being something that I grab for again after it's done. It's a shame because the premise is so good!

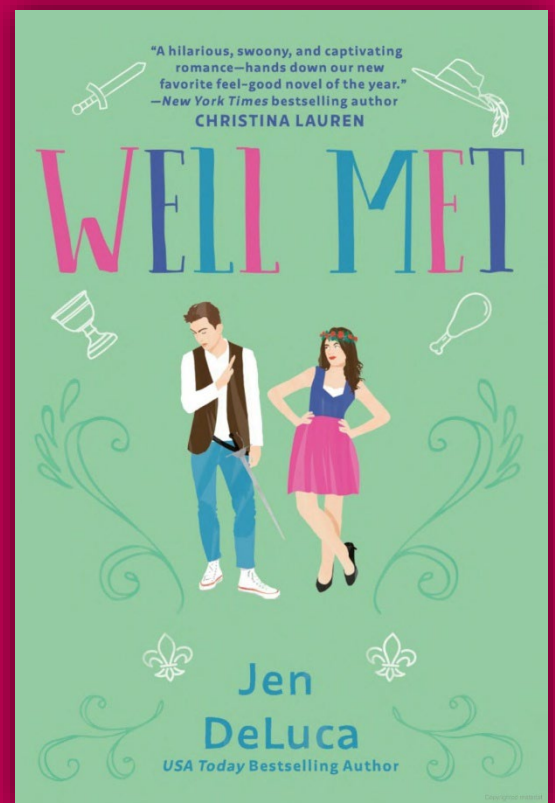


WHAT I'M READING IN FEBRUARY

For my February selection I chose *Well Met* by Jen DeLuca. The provided synopsis for this novel is as follows:

“Emily knew there would be strings attached when she relocated to the small town of Willow Creek, Maryland, for the summer to help her sister recover from an accident, but who could anticipate getting roped into volunteering for the local Renaissance Faire alongside her teenaged niece? Or that the irritating and inscrutable schoolteacher in charge of the volunteers would be so annoying that she finds it impossible to stop thinking about him?”

I'm excited to dive into this literary Rom-Com! I think it will be a nice change of pace from my January selection (see above). Modern romance also tends to read pretty quickly, so I don't see myself struggling to get through this one at all. And I love the idea of finding love at a renaissance fair. How cute!

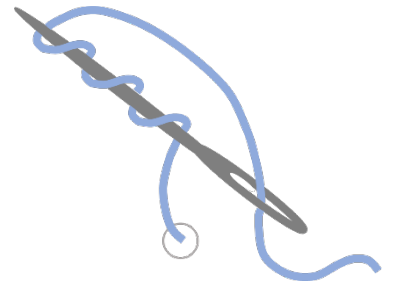


FRENCH KNOTS

French knots intimidate a lot of stitchers, and for good reason. They can be quite frustrating if you have never worked them before. But, if you follow a few easy steps, these decorative knots can be completed with little to no hassle.

I like to use two strands of floss to complete French knots, but some patterns may call for 3 or more strands.

To begin, secure your floss on the backside and putting your needle up through the fabric at the space noted on the pattern, pull the floss all the way through. Hold the floss vertically above your fabric. Now, turning your needle so that the pointed end is facing up the floss, wrap the floss around the needle three times.



Keeping the floss wrapped, turn your needle downward and insert it back into the fabric. Depending on the type of fabric you are working on, you can insert the needle in different



locations. If working on evenweave, it's best to insert the needle one fiber over from where you brought the floss up. If you are working on Aida, you can put the needle down through the same fabric hole (shown on the left), however, be careful not to pull too hard or the knot could be pulled through the fabric. If you are struggling with knots pulling through, you can instead puncture the fabric in the middle of the stitching space or even move one hole over.

At this point, you have reached the most important part of the process. The key to getting good French knots is to keep the floss secure but not tight against the needle as you pull it through the fabric.

With your needle still inserted in the fabric, gently pull on the floss until it fits nicely bundled against the needle. We want it to be tight enough that there is no loose slack in the strands, but we want it loose enough that the needle does not face any resistance when pulling through. You will need to practice using different tensions until you get the best result.

Once the needle has passed through the fabric, you can let go of your tension on the floss and continue to pull the floss through until it is secure against the knot. And, voila!

You have completed a French knot!



The Stitching Book Club Website
OPENING MARCH 9

New merchandise, new patterns, tutorials and more!



Love Grows



Materials:

Fabric: 8 inch X 8 inch for 14 count or 28 count 2 over 2. Model is stitched on 14 count white Aida. The design area for this design is 57 X 59 stitches.

Legend (2 strands of floss):

♥	♥	DMC Cotton 891	carnation - dk
∩	∩	DMC Cotton 956	geranium
♡	♡	DMC Cotton 894	carnation - vy lt
⌘	⌘	DMC Cotton 563	jade – lt
⌘	⌘	DMC Cotton 369	pistachio green - vy lt

Love Grows by Sapphire Mountain Handcrafts

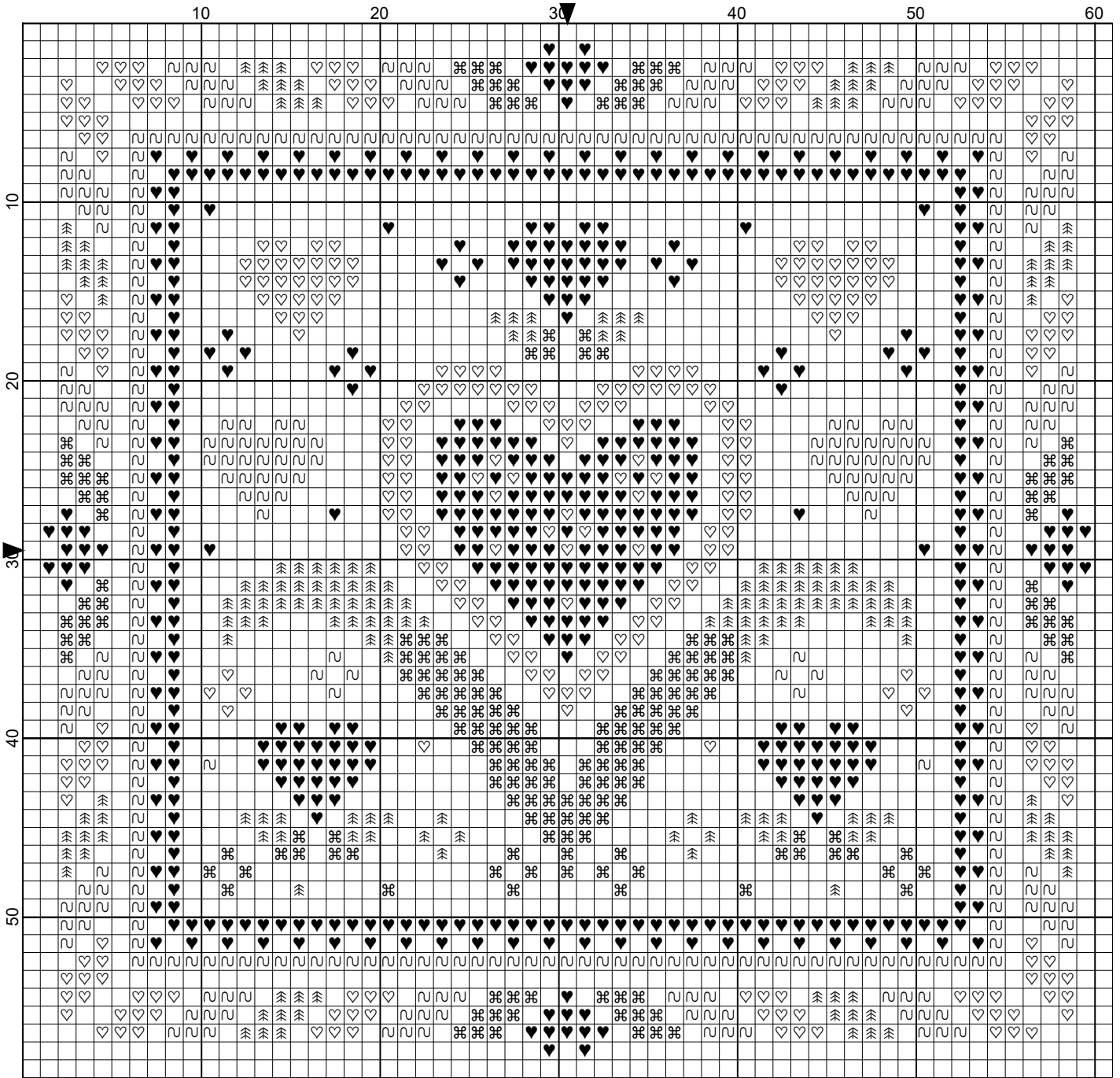


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Legend:

-  DMC-563
-  DMC-956
-  DMC-891
-  DMC-894
-  DMC-369

Love Grows by Sapphire Mountain Handcrafts



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Legend:

-  DMC-563
-  DMC-956
-  DMC-891
-  DMC-894
-  DMC-369

Monthly Stitch-A-Long

Join me for a year-long freebie stitch-a-long!

Want to participate in a year-long stitch-a-long but worried about committing to such a large project? I have the perfect SAL for you! While this SAL will extend for the entire length of the year, the monthly stitching requirement is minimal. This means that you will be able to fit it into your stitching schedule with ease. What's even better is that it is a **stitch-from-stash** SAL. While I will be providing the floss colors that I am using each month, I encourage you to use what you have on hand to make this piece entirely your own!

The design features a small motif that represents each month. For example, January is a snowflake. February is geared towards Valentine's Day. I think you get the idea...

What you will need:

Fabric:

One piece of fabric measuring 11 X 13 inches for 14 or 28 count (2 over 2). It will be stitched in portrait orientation (taller than it is wider) and allows for a 2 inch margin on all sides.

I chose to work with my hand-dyed fabric Garden Gate (not yet available for purchase but coming soon!). I think this design will look particularly fabulous on dark fabrics, especially when paired with bright flosses. However, I also love the appearance of white fabric with more muted colors.

But the choice is entirely up to you!

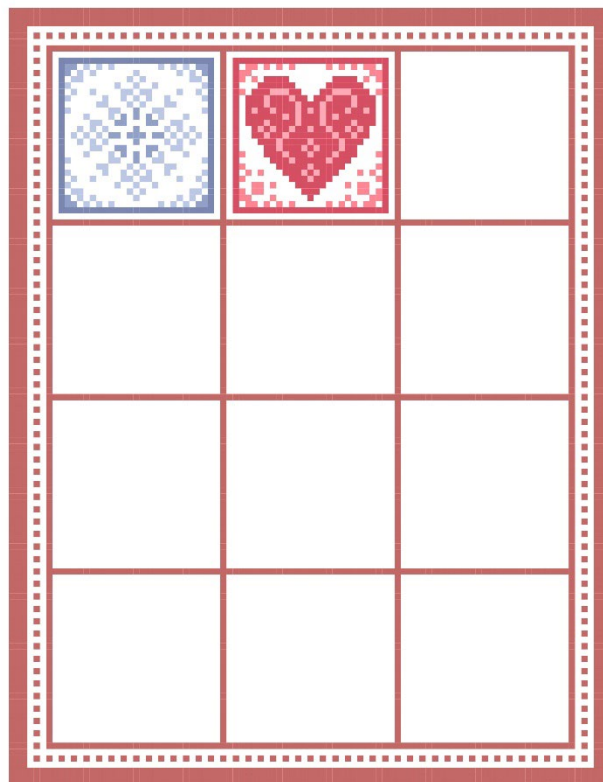
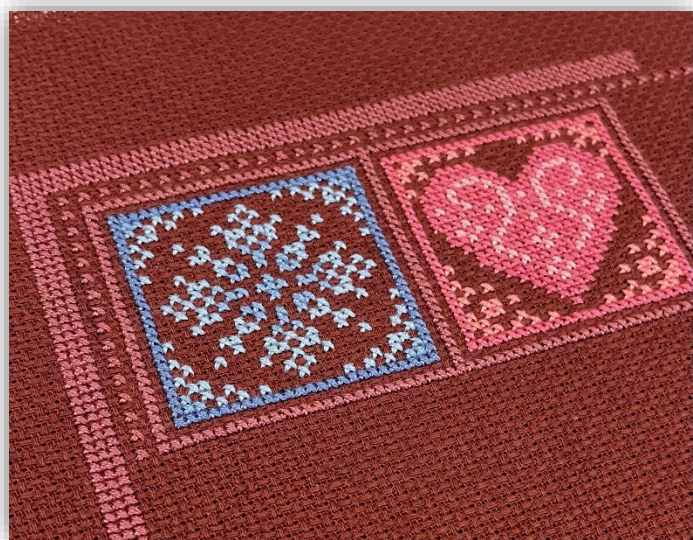
Floss:

The only color of floss that requires a significant amount will be the border color. You will need 2 skeins of whatever color you choose.

The rest of the floss colors are minimal and change each month but will feature a full rainbow of colors including blues, pinks, greens, purples, and oranges.

While I have provided the entire border, do not feel required to stitch the entire border as we begin. I will be stitching the border as I go along each month. If you would like to stitch the entire border as we get started, please make sure to triple count all those stitches so that the boxes are the proper size. I don't want the frog visiting you all later in the year!

Little Moments

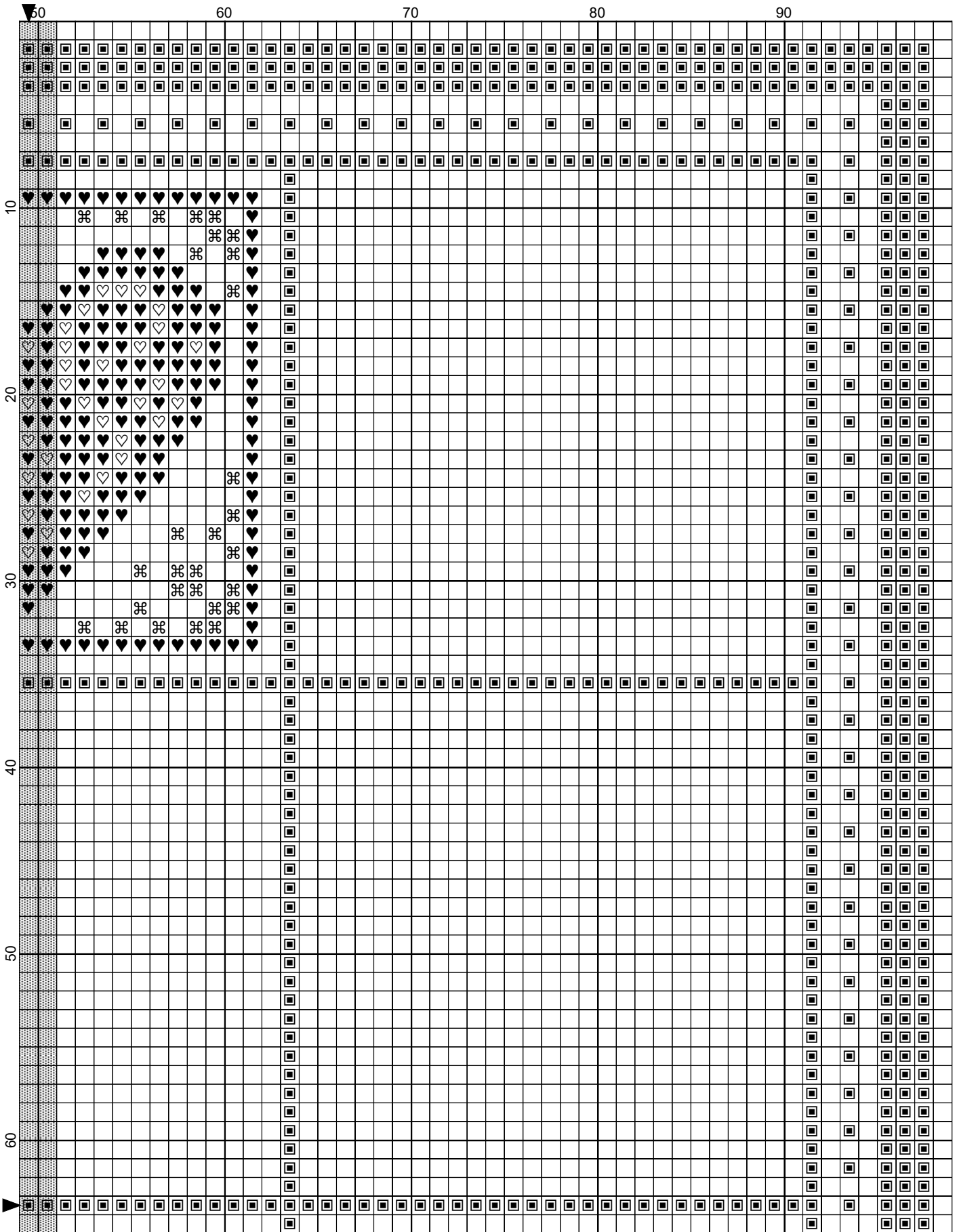


This is a stitch-from-stash SAL, please feel free to choose your own materials for this design. Listed below are the colors I am using.

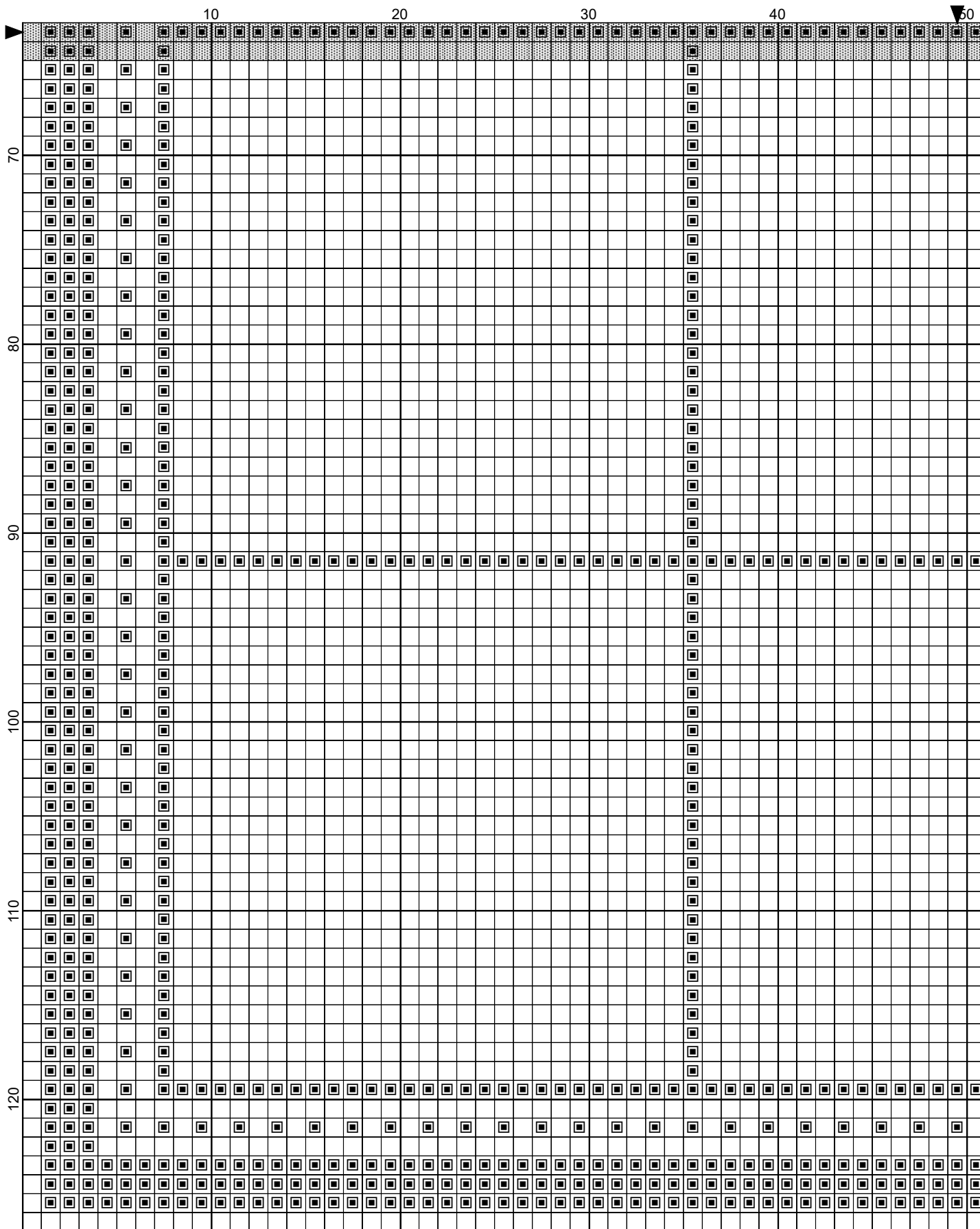
Legend (2 strands of floss):

▣	DMC Cotton 3722	shell pink - md
★	DMC Cotton 793	cornflower blue - md
≡	DMC Cotton 794	cornflower blue - lt
✓	DMC Cotton 157	cornflower blue - vy lt
♥	DMC Cotton 335	rose
⌘	DMC Cotton 3706	melon - md
♡	DMC Cotton 3708	melon - lt

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