



# ***Blackwork Journey***

## ***Techniques***

TQ0018

***Useful Knotted Stitches***

***French Knots***

***Colonial Knots***

***Double Knot Stitch***

***Coral Stitch***

***The Working Environment by Liz Almond***

## *Useful Knotted Stitches*

There are several knotted stitches I often use for adding texture and interest to my designs as an alternative to beads and it may be worthwhile adding some of them to your repertoire.

*French or Colonial Knots* can be used in isolation or grouped together. They can be created in the same thread as the embroidery and can be positioned accurately on the fabric.

*Double Knot and Coral Stitch* can be used to create outlines, adding interest and texture and whilst there are many other knotted stitches which fulfil this requirement, these are the two I personally find most useful.

To achieve a satisfactory result, it is necessary to practice any new stitch, but especially with knotted stitches where the final result has to be regular, even and the correct size for the embroidery. Using a frame or hoop makes creating these stitches more accurate because the fabric is under tension. If the frame is free standing, then both hands are left free.

Using different numbers and types of threads, such as two or three threads of cotton Pérlé and tapestry wool can change the dynamics of the stitches and create a very different effect, so understanding and using these stitches can be very useful. However, remember to use a needle large enough to take the thread comfortably!

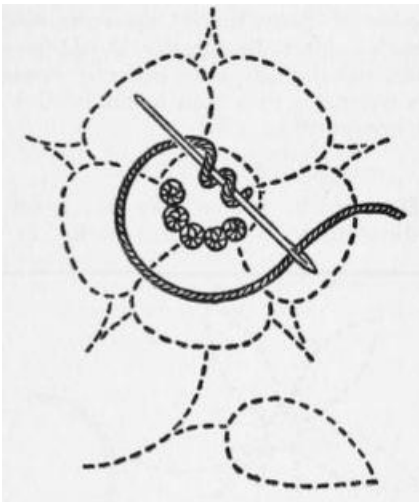
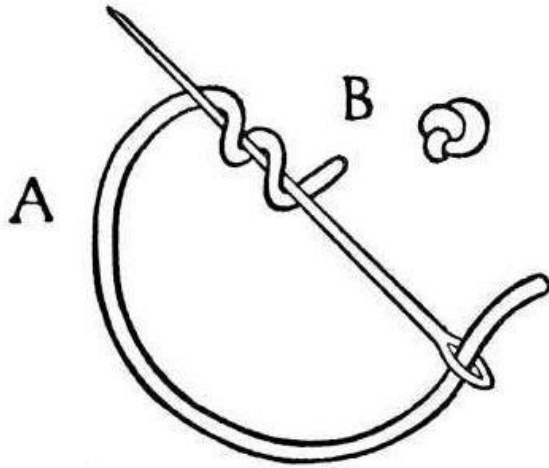
The stitches I use most frequently and which are outlined in this ‘Techniques’ leaflet are:

- *French Knots*
- *Colonial Knots*
- *Double Knot Stitch (Palestrina)*
- *Coral Stitch (Snail Trail, Scroll Stitch)*

## *French Knots*

Method:

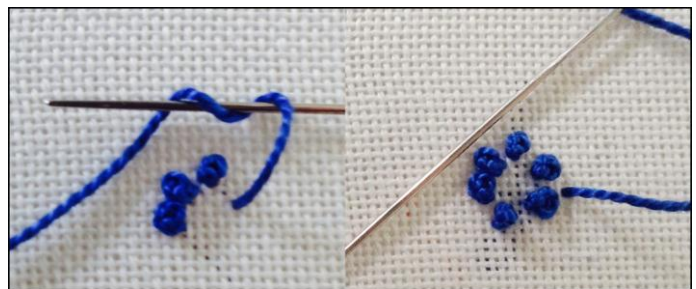
- a. Bring the thread through the fabric from back to front at the point where the knot is to be placed.
- b. Hold the thread firmly in the left hand. Wrap the thread round the needle two or three times.
- c. Still holding the needle firmly and vertically, push back through the fabric close to where the needle was first pushed through.
- d. Pull the thread through gently and the knot will sit on the surface of the material.



French Knots are used as fillings and for anywhere the effect of a single dot is required. They can be used in place of beads and be accurately located on the surface of the fabric. However, practice is needed if every knot is to appear the same and for this reason, I prefer to use Colonial Knots



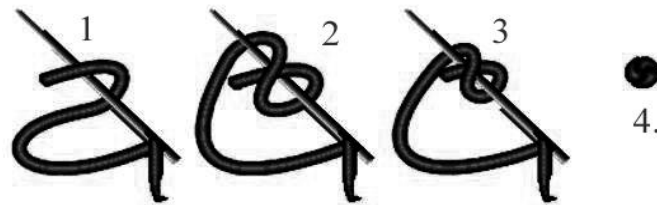
*French knots worked in tapestry wool on canvas.*



*French knots worked in cotton Pèrlé on evenweave*

## Colonial Knots

Colonial Knots require practice, but they produce identical knots every time and can be repeated as many times as required. Any thickness of thread can be used making them suitable for a wide range of embroidery techniques.

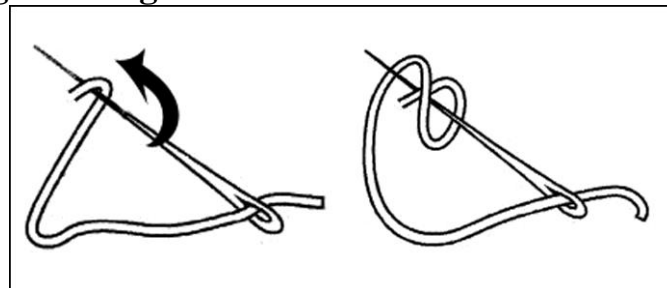


Stages 1 - 4

Method:

A Colonial Knot is worked in stages:

- a. Bring the needle up through the fabric as you would a French knot.
- b. **Push the thread away from** you towards the **RIGHT**. Wrap the thread round the needle in a **figure of eight**.



Use your thumb to control the thread.

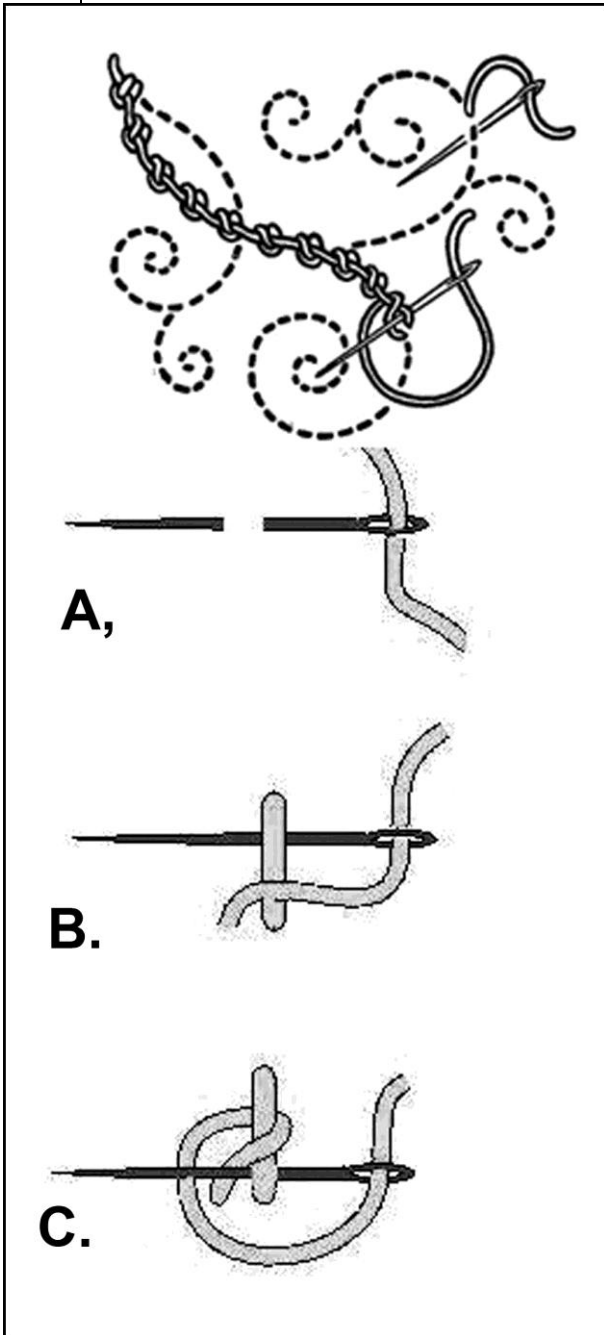
- c. Keep the needle as upright as possible and push the needle downwards into almost the same spot as you came up.
- d. Pull the thread gently and you will have a perfect colonial knot every time!

*Colonial Knots worked in three strands of embroidery floss*

*Figure of eight!*



## *Double Knot Stitch*



This stitch looks like beads worked closely together. It is a simple, textured and effective stitch! Use 3 or more strands of floss to create a beaded appearance on evenweave fabric. Space carefully, allowing each bead enough room to sit comfortably on the fabric.

Thicker threads such as cotton Pérlé and wool are appropriate where heavier lines are required.

Method:

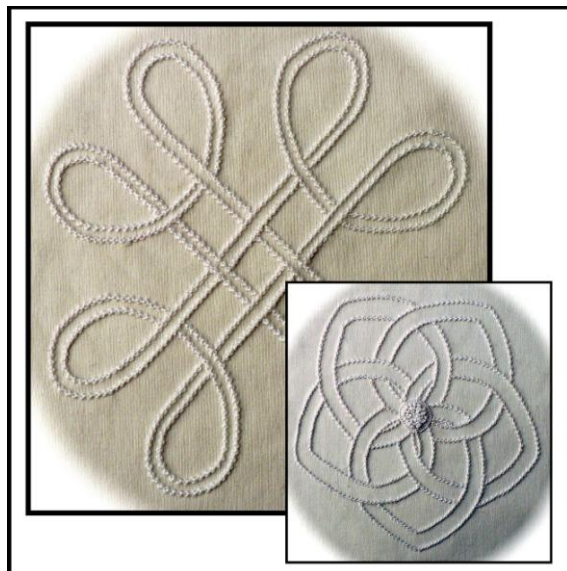
a. Worked downwards, towards you. If necessary, draw a pencil line to practice. Pick up a small stitch either side of the line.

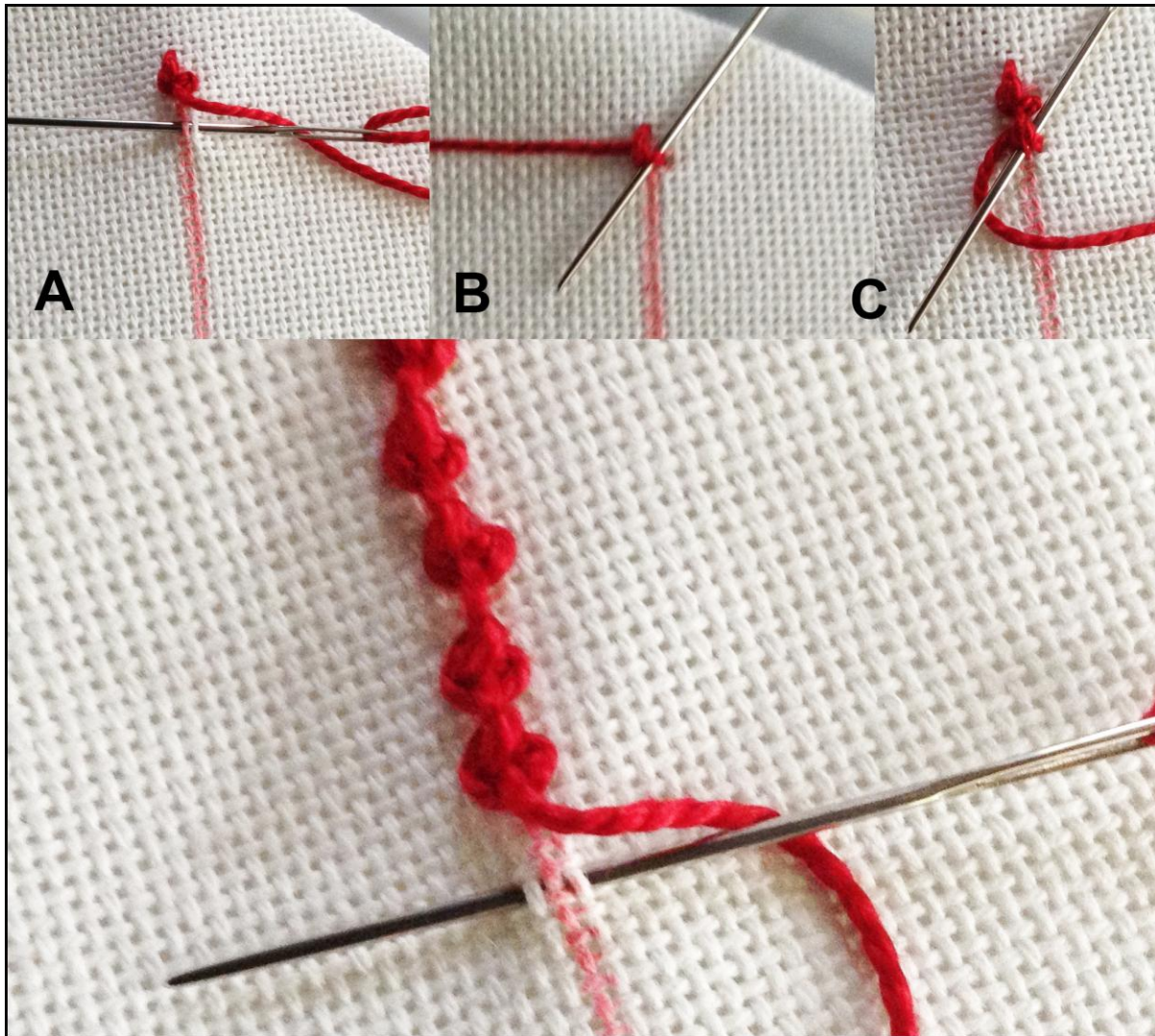
b. Slide the needle under the stitch from RIGHT to LEFT.

c. Pull gently to the left and you will see a small tail. Slide the needle downwards under the little stitch, wrap the thread round and pull gently!

Move downwards repeating the three stages for the length required.

*PR0015 Celtic Braids are all worked in Double Knot Stitch*





*Double Knot stitch worked in cotton Péré*

### ***Coral Stitch***

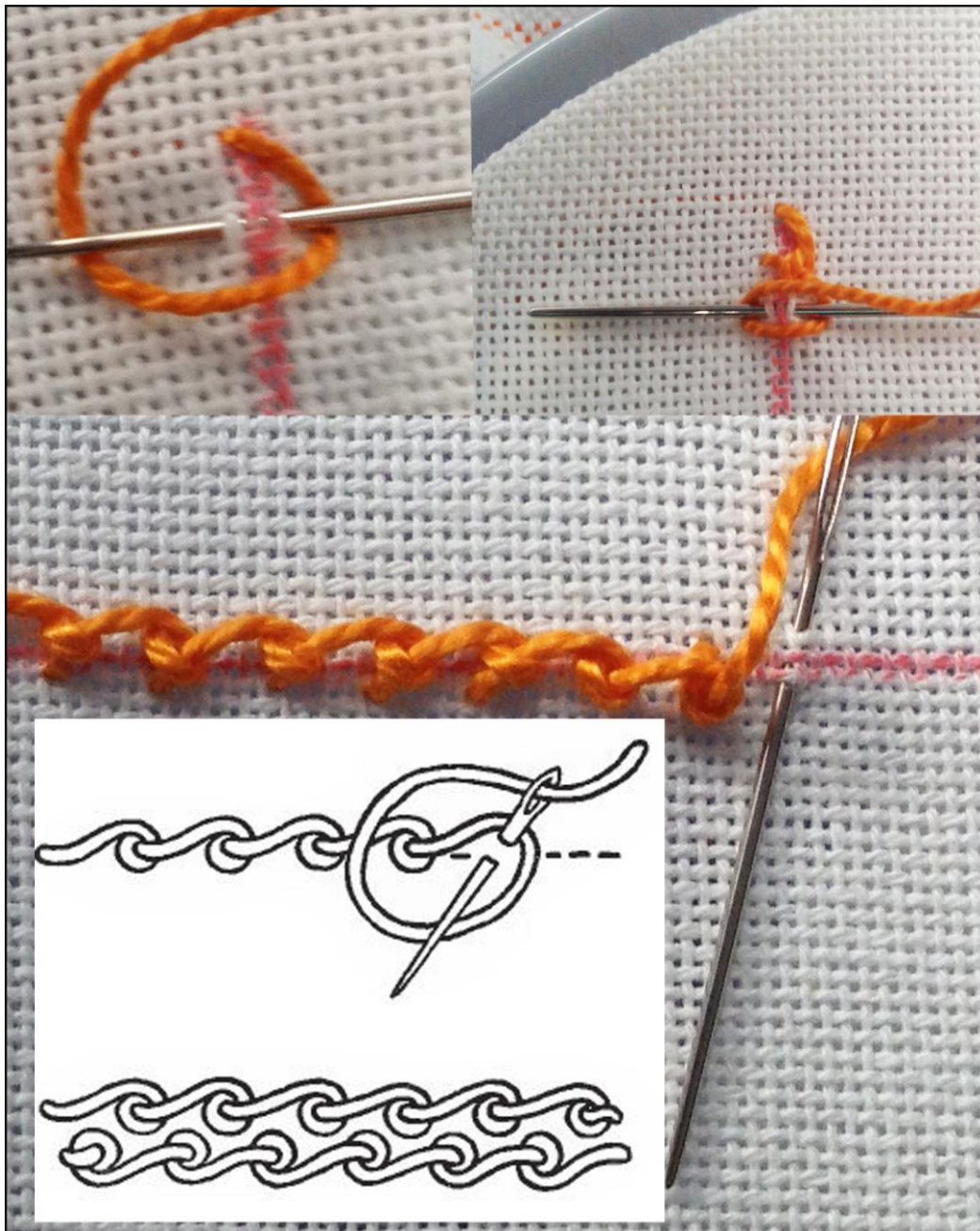
This stitch is known by many other names, Beaded Stitch, German Knot Stitch, Snail Trail and Scroll Stitch.

This is a useful stitch for outline patterns and is used in Schwalm embroidery inside a chain stitch outline. It is not as heavy as double knot stitch, but is formed in a similar manner working downwards along a line.

Method:

- a. Bring the thread through on the right hand side of a traced line. Pick up a small piece of material from right to left, making a small slanting stitch
- b. Wrap the thread under the needle and pull it through gently.

c. This completes the first stitch. Continue down the line picking up a small piece of material, wrapping the thread round the needle and pulling it through. Correct tension is important to ensure a neat line and the stitches need to be evenly spaced.



*Coral Stitch worked in cotton Péré*

Investigating new stitches enhances knowledge and expands horizons. Do not be frightened to explore new ideas!

Happy stitching! *Liz*