

Long & Short Stitch

Lesson 3: Stitching to a Point - Triangles

Objectives:

- To practice stitching long and short stitch to a converging point, keeping the correct stitch direction
- To understand how to reduce the number of stitches in smaller spaces, without bunching, in a way that looks natural

Materials:

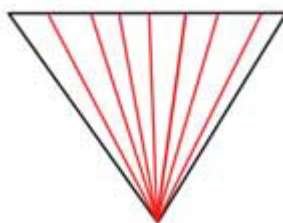
- Project in hoop or frame, with Element Two: Triangles centered in hoop (lower left corner of design)
- #9 or #10 crewel needles
- Small, sharp embroidery scissors
- DMC stranded cotton in the following colors: 158 (dark), 159 (light), 160 (medium-light), 161 (medium)

NOTE: The technique of the stitch is the same learned in lesson two. This particular lesson presents two challenges: keeping your stitch direction and reducing the number of stitches as the space gets smaller.

Procedure:

To Begin:

- Begin with the top triangle.
- Anchor your thread according to your favorite method, or use the method demonstrated in the video tutorial, part 1.
- Work a split stitch line across the top of the triangle in dark blue (158)
- Beginning in the center of the top line, draw a vertical line to the tip of the triangle, then split the remaining distance on each side of the top line, drawing straight lines from any point on the top line to the tip of the triangle, more or less like so:



TRIANGE 1 – Top left triangle

First Row – Dark Blue (158)

- Bring your needle up through the fabric, about 3/8" below the split stitch line, in the top center of the box. Take your first stitch over the split stitch line and back into the fabric. Now, working down the row to the right, space about four directional stitches more or less the same length. This is illustrated in the basic long and short stitch video, part 1. The difference is that your stitches must follow the directional lines you have marked, so they point towards the tip of the triangle. After placing in your

directional lines (which are “long” stitches), go back to the center and work to the right, filling in “short” stitches of varying lengths, moving down the row.



Lines drawn in on a rather messy triangle...

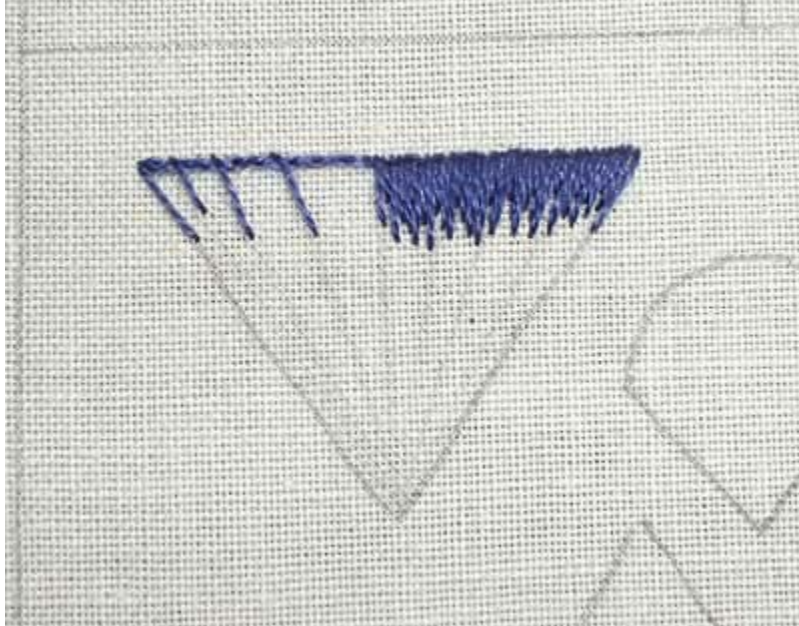


Directional stitches, and beginning to fill them

- You want your stitches to lie right next to each other, as they would in satin stitch, so make sure that you space them correctly – not too close that they bunch up, but not too far apart that you can see any fabric between them.
- Continue working across the fabric to the right side of the triangle, alternating the size of your stitches between long and short. Vary their lengths. For a natural-looking long and short stitch (less formal and rigid-looking), stagger the length of your stitches between several lengths – some long, some a little shorter, then a bit longer, then shorter again, then shorter yet, then a little longer, then

long, then short, then slightly longer, etc. You want the bottom edge of your stitched row to be jagged, but you still want to keep an overall consistent length across the longest points of the stitches.

- When you reach the right edge of the triangle, end with a long stitch on the pencil line. This is approximately what your progress should look like so far:



- Now move back to the middle of the triangle and work from the center to the left side of the triangle, doing the same thing.



- You can refer to the Basic Long and Short Stitch Video, part 1, on Needle 'n Thread (www.needlenthread.com) to see this technique worked out.

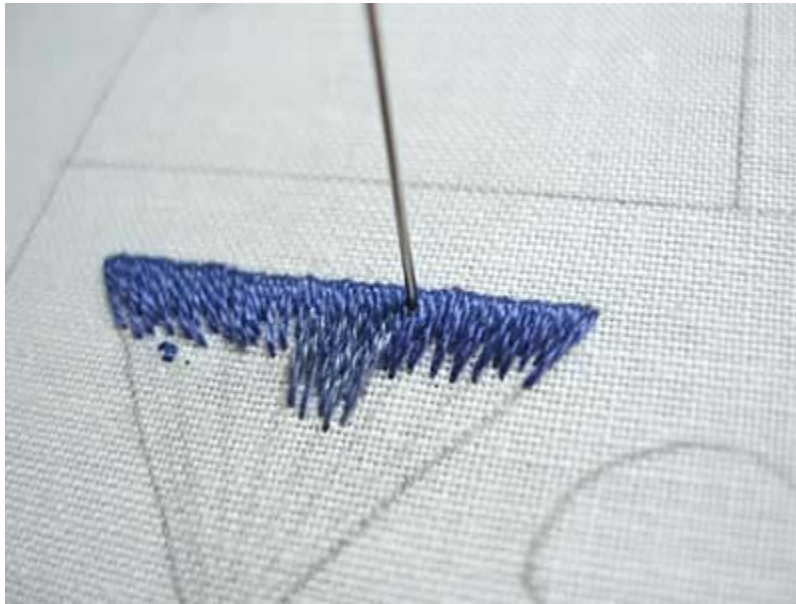
Second Row & Subsequent Rows (up to, but not including, the last row)

- After the first row, each row is worked in the following sequence of colors:
 - Row 2: 161 (medium blue)
 - Row 3: 160 (medium-light blue)
- For subsequent rows, after the first row, bring your needle up from the back of your fabric into the first row of stitches, in the center. Then take your stitch down into the fabric, following your directional lines. To help keep the direction of your stitches, pull your working thread to the tip of the triangle, so you can always see in what direction your stitches should be pointing.

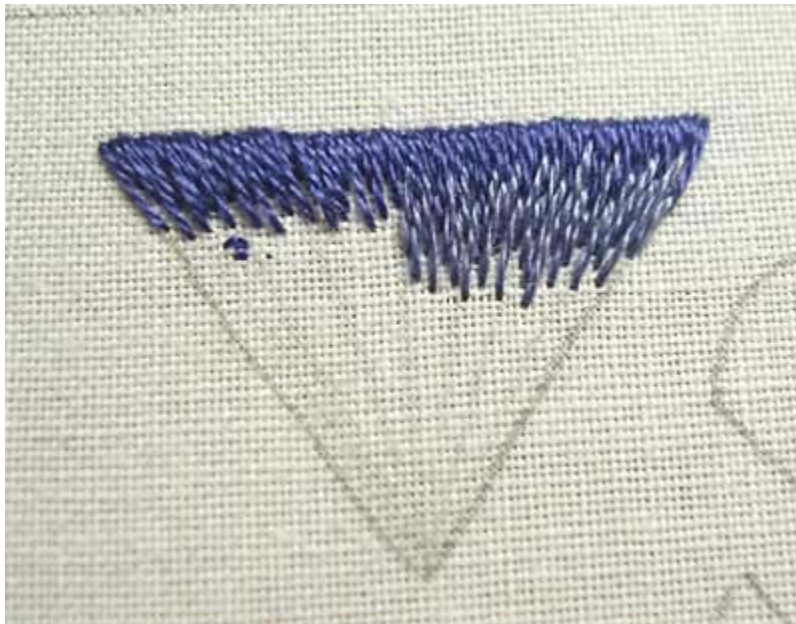


- You may add directional stitches if it is easier for you, and then fill in. Or you may work straight across the row to the right edge of the triangle.

- Go deep into the first row of stitches, and vary the entry point of your stitches, following basically the long and short pattern from the row above. Remember, though, that the second row is shorter than the first, so you can't fit in as many stitches. You won't be bringing your needle up into *every* stitch on the first row. Try to gauge this as you go. Directional stitches may help you with this.



- Continue to the right side of the triangle:



- And then go back to the center and work left:

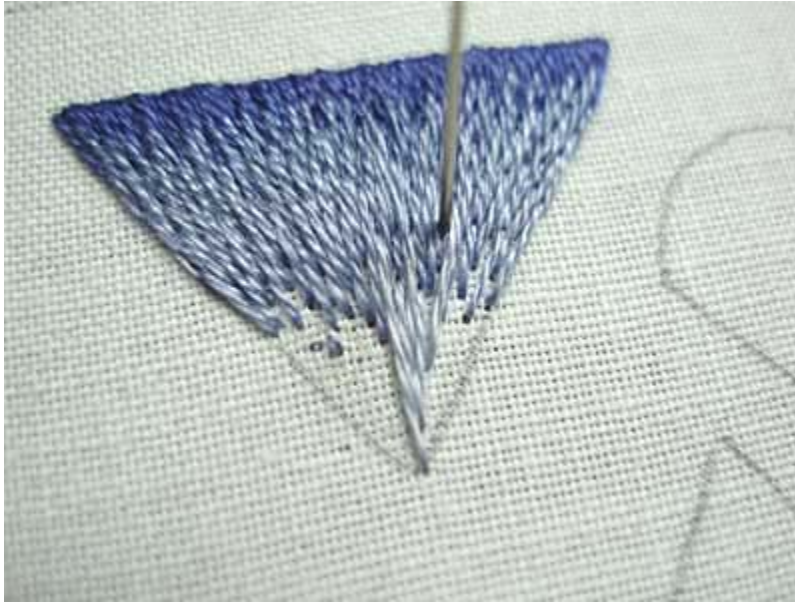


- Follow the same procedure in the next row, working with the medium-light blue (160), and keeping in mind the following:
 - Keep your stitches directed towards the point
 - Don't crowd them in – there will be even fewer stitches in this row
- When you finish the third row, it should look more or less like this:



Last Row

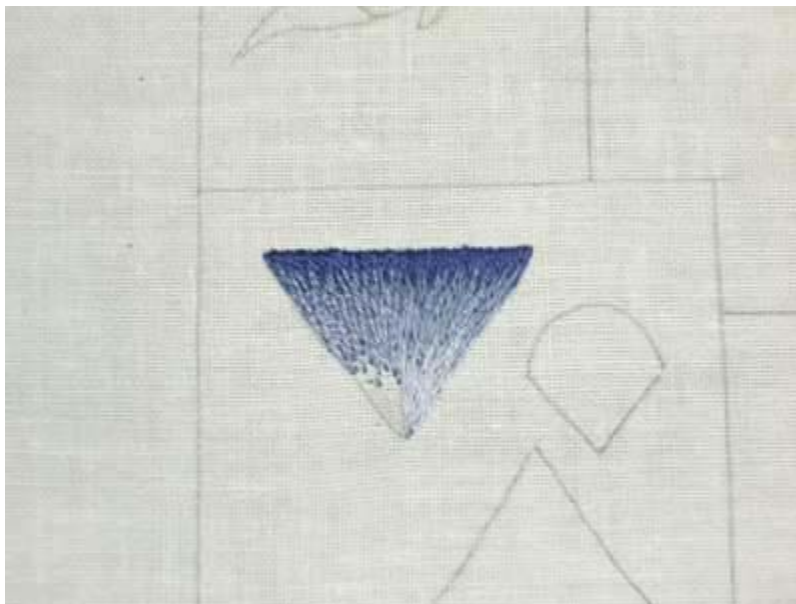
- The last row is the trickiest. You should be close enough to the tip of the triangle that your first stitch reaches the tip. If it doesn't, don't worry. I think it actually works a bit better if your first stitch doesn't reach the tip. Ok, now – pay attention – this is where “tucking in” stitches comes in handy.



- All the stitches it will take to fill the top part of this row cannot fit into the tip of the triangle. So, you're going to work long and short stitches, but pretty much what's going to happen is that your long stitches will “overlap” the base of the short ones, which won't be “finished” down to the tip. And, you may find that you have to go back to fill in a gap at the top – to sneak a stitch in. At that point, you'll angle your needle underneath the stitches that are already there. (This is when you'll really find out how handy good lighting is!!)



- In the picture above, my needle is angled underneath the stitch on its left. I'm tucking the new stitch in, so that I don't have bulk building up at the tip. Continue to the right side of the triangle:



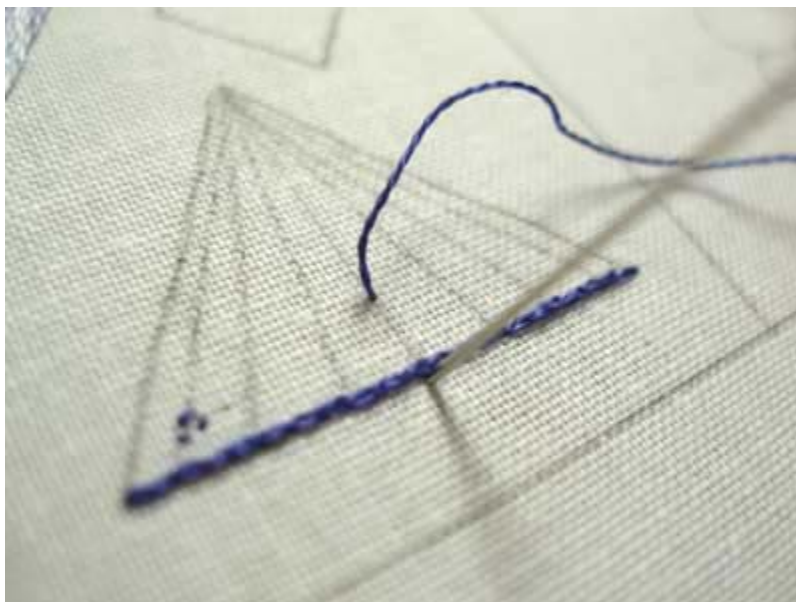
- ... and then go back to the center and work in the same manner to the left side of the triangle:



Second Triangle

The method for the rest of Element Two: Triangles is the same. I've provided photos of different stages below.

- The second triangle is worked in the same manner, only going upwards from the broad base line to the tip.

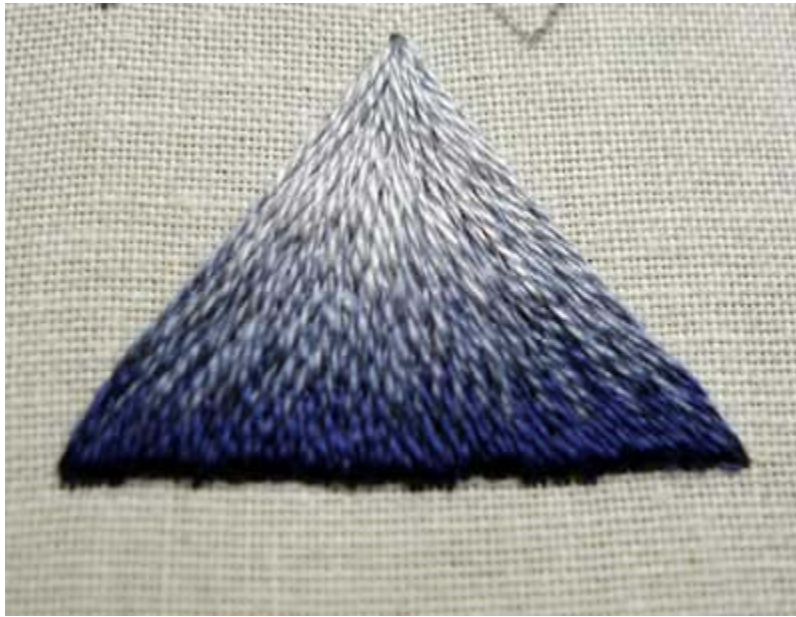




Directional lines are stitched in...



The edge of the base is not as smooth as I would like it to be!



The finished second triangle

Small Triangle with Curved Top



Split stitch the top and draw in directional lines towards the tip



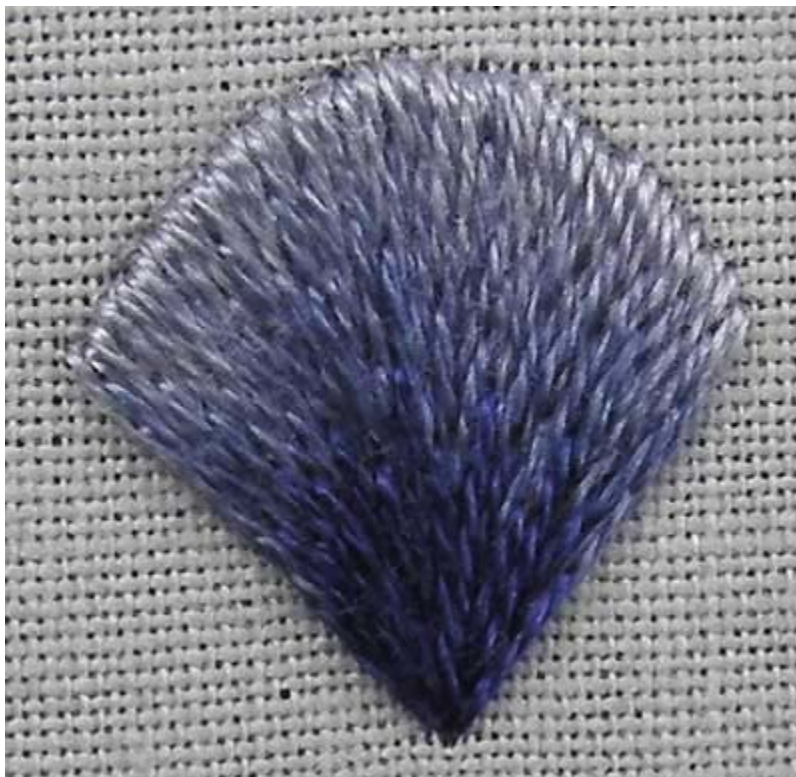
First row complete



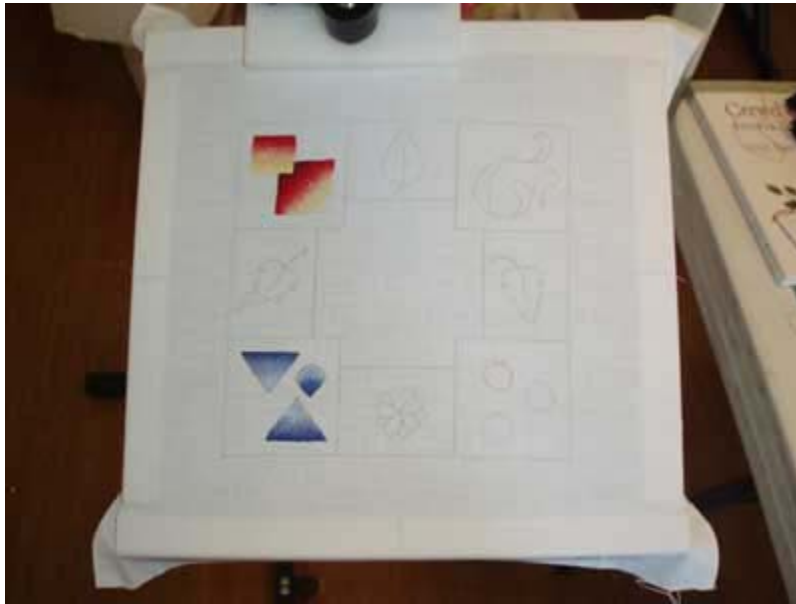
Second & third rows complete



Tucking in a stitch...



Close-up on the finished element...



Sampler so far