

## Long & Short Stitch Lesson 6: A Simple Leaf

### Objectives:

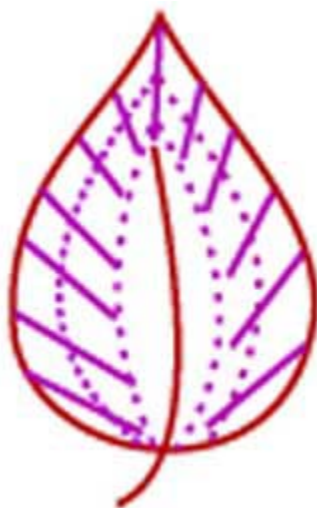
- To practice long and short stitch shading on a simple leaf shape

### Materials:

- Project in hoop or frame, with Element Five: Simple Leaf centered in hoop (upper center of design)
- #9 or #10 crewel needles
- Small, sharp embroidery scissors
- DMC stranded cotton in the following colors: greens: 3011 (dk), 3012 (med), 3013 (lt) & burgundy 814

NOTE: Refer to the long and short stitch videos included in Lesson Two on Needle 'n Thread ([www.needlenthread.com](http://www.needlenthread.com)) for basic technique. All stitching is done with one strand (from the six) of regular DMC 6-stranded embroidery floss, except for the stem, which is worked in two strands.

### Procedure:



- For stitch directions, mark your leaf with a pencil. The purple solid lines in the diagram above illustrate the direction of your stitching, while the dotted lines can be penciled in to illustrate the areas of color change.

When stitching a natural object, like a leaf or flower petal, the stitch direction follows the natural direction of growth. The stitches angle towards the “growth point” of the element. In a leaf, that is the center base of the leaf towards the stem.



- Split stitch around the leaf in the lightest green, 3013.



- As we did in the boxes of lesson two and the triangles of lesson three, stitch in some directional stitches using light green (3013). These stitches will be about a quarter of an inch long, and will act as “long” stitches. They can extend slightly beyond your first “color area” marked on the leaf. (My pencil markings on the leaf above are a mess – but they’ll be covered, thank goodness!)

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- Begin the long and short stitching in the middle of the side of the leaf, and work to the base and then to the tip. I left the base of the leaf (down by the stem) blank, and filled it in last, after finishing the rest of the leaf. You will see this as the lesson progresses. Stagger your stitches, long and short, as explained in previous lessons.



- After stitching one side of the leaf in light green (3013), move to the other side, and stitch the other side in the same manner. When stitching at the tip of the leaf especially, the stitch direction will change drastically as you fill in. Tuck in little hidden stitches as necessary to neatly fill the area.



- The light green (3013) is complete.



- Thread your needle with medium green (3012), and, beginning in the middle of the side of the leaf, work the next layer of long and short stitches down to the base, and then go back to the center and stitch up to the tip. As you get to the tip, manipulate your stitches as best as possible to give good coverage, but don't crowd your stitches into the tip. You will be using fewer stitches as you work towards the center of the leaf. Stitch both sides of the leaf in the same manner, filling the middle color area with the medium green.



- Once the medium green is completed, switch to the darkest green, 3011. Begin in the middle and work up to the tip, bringing your stitches to the center vein line on the leaf. On each side of the leaf, your stitches will meet at the center, forming a line down the middle of the leaf.



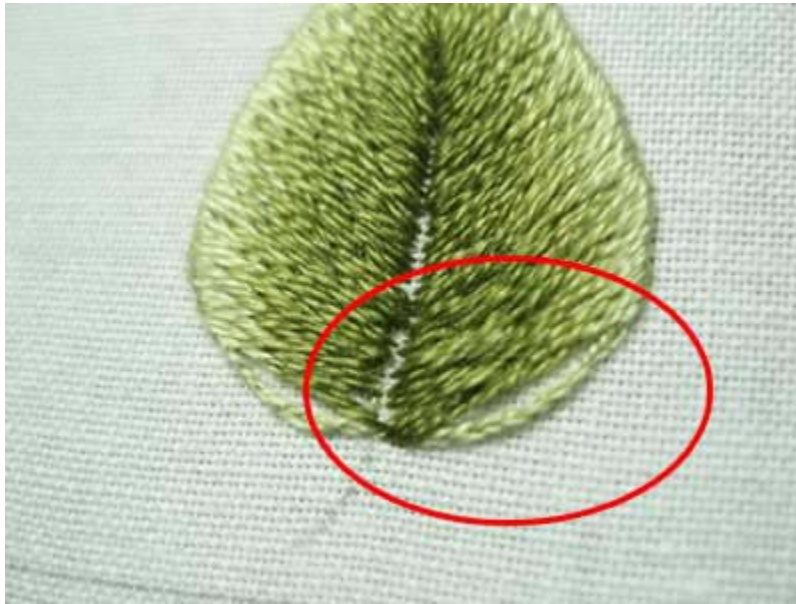
- Stretch your stitches to the center line where possible - up towards the top of the leaf, this will be easy, as the distance to the center line is not as far. As you work down the leaf (you can see this in the photo above), your long stitches may be too long if they are to meet the center line. This is ok. Don't take them all the way to the center line - you can go back and fill in one more layer of the dark green, to complete the filling process.



- You can see in the circled area that my dark green did not stretch all the way to the central line. After working this area, I went back and filled in with another layer of dark green.



- As you fill in at the base of the leaf with the dark green, take the stitches over the split stitch line where the stem meets the base, as necessary.



- You will notice here that I have still got one area at the base of the leaf, on both sides, that is not filled.



- At this point, instead of long and short stitch, I will use long straight stitches (satin stitch) to cover the rest of the base of the leaf. I worked these in medium green (3012).



- This is the leaf, completely filled in.



- There are a couple little “trouble” spots, but I didn’t let them worry me. The first is that area on the center line. You can see the white fabric there where the stitches don’t meet, and you can see one area where the stitches in the center meet. We will stitch a stem over this, so this will not be noticeable and is not worth correcting. Also, at the base, the satin stitches seem more obvious, as they are not shaded. Once the stem is in, however, they will be less noticeable.





- For the stem, take one strand of dark green (3011) and one strand of burgundy (814) and thread both strands in your needle. You do not need to arrange them in any special way – just thread them both in.



- Beginning at the base of the stem (the end of the stem line, farthest away from the leaf), using stem stitch, work your way to the tip of the stem area on the leaf. End your stem line about 1/2" – 3/4" below the tip of the leaf. If you are unsure of how to work the stem stitch, check out the video on Needle 'n Thread ([www.needlenthread.com](http://www.needlenthread.com))

Congratulations! Element Five is complete, and you're ready to move on to Element Six – another leaf, but slightly more complicated than this one.