



Fabrics 101: Embroidering on Canvas

If you need a sturdy fabric to support a stitch-filled design, or a rugged material to stand up to heavy use, canvas is going to be just what you need. Think beyond the standard beige tote bags - today's canvas comes in types suitable for all kinds of projects. And the best part is, with a bit of attention to detail, it's very easy to embroider. Read on for some tips and tricks!

Steps To Complete

Choosing Your Materials

FABRIC: Canvas comes in a wonderful variety of weights, colors, and even prints. Many of the projects we make use lightweight canvas from the home decorating department of our local Joann Fabrics.

Another type of canvas you might encounter is duck -- a tightly woven fabric. There's also outdoor canvas, which is treated to withstand the elements better than ordinary fabric. Keep it in mind for indoor projects, too - there are lots of cheery colors and prints to be found!

All types of canvas are known for their sturdiness and strength, made from a plain, simple weave. While modern canvas is usually made of cotton, in the past it's been made out of other fibers like hemp and linen. In fact, "duck" comes from the Dutch word for linen canvas - not the aquatic birds!



Make sure to thoroughly pre-shrink your canvas before embroidering it. Since it's cotton, it might shrink quite a bit -- and you want to make sure your design stays flat and pretty even after it's washed.

DESIGN: You can embroider pretty much any designs you want on canvas - it's sturdy enough to carry even heavy designs well, and its flat surface means even light designs like redwork will appear bright and

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HOOPING: Spray a piece of medium weight cutaway stabilizer generously with temporary spray adhesive (we use Gunold KK100), then smooth the canvas on top. When the two layers are smoothly attached, hoop them together as tightly and evenly as possible.



Embroider the design.



FINISHING: And you're done! Cut away the excess stabilizer and keep sewing your project. Canvas is a great medium for embroidery because it's sturdy, it's easy to work with, and it gets along well with cutaway stabilizer.



Stitch a colorful tote for summer trips to the beach! Even solid, stitch filled designs like this giraffe can be stitched smoothly and beautifully on canvas.



Have fun experimenting with subtle prints! Embroiderers tend to stay away from printed fabrics for fear of having them clash with the designs -- but low-key prints can add another element of interest.

On your next trip to the fabric store, enjoy "canvassing" the options!