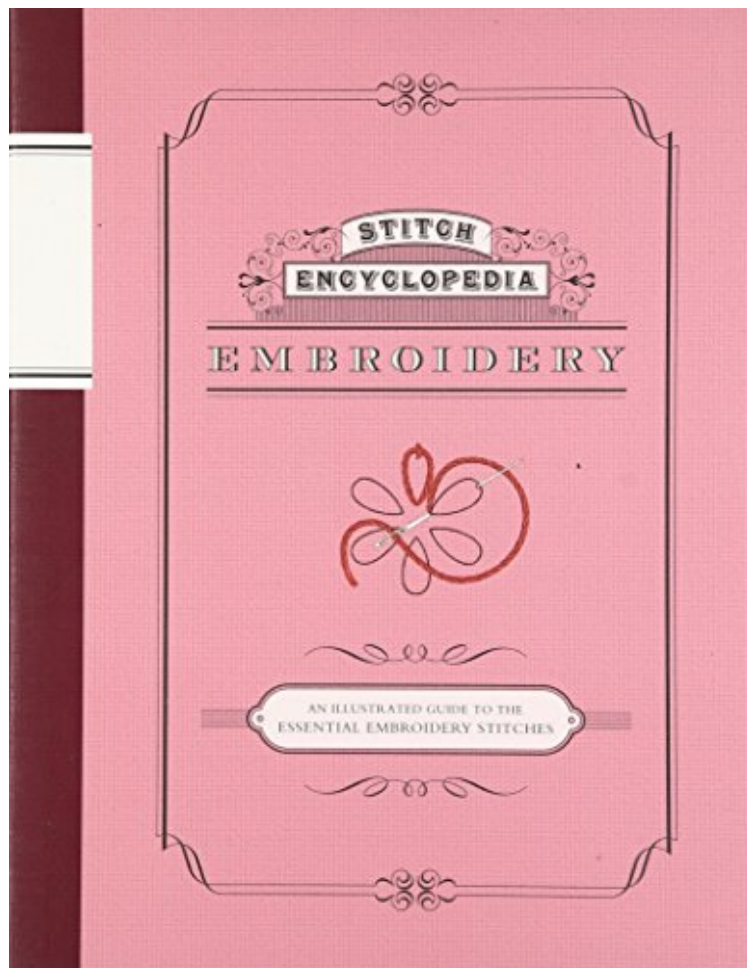


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Stitch Encyclopedia: Embroidery: An Illustrated Guide to the Essential Embroidery Stitches

Bunka Gakuen

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Bunka Gakuen : *Stitch Encyclopedia: Embroidery: An Illustrated Guide to the Essential Embroidery Stitches* before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised *Stitch Encyclopedia: Embroidery: An Illustrated Guide to the Essential Embroidery Stitches*:

14 of 15 people found the following review helpful. Augh! I both love and hate this book! Well...dislike minor parts of it By Jane in Milwaukee Always on the look-out for new needlework books, particularly stitch guides, I snapped up this new one. Well...it's not brand new: this is the first publication in the U.S. by Chronicle Books but it's originally from Japan from 2010. (I can't help but give its Japanese title: *Kihon No Stitch Ga Wakaru Hon Hajimemashite No Shishu*. It cracks me up that there must be no Japanese word "stitch.") Originating from Japan is probably the source of the frustration with the book--it should be a wonderful 5-star book but its deficits could actually merit it 3 stars. Despite its

drawbacks, I give it 4 stars. The 5-star components are that, having Japanese authors, it is fresh and inviting to peruse. The drawings of the stitches are a little unusual and are more explicit than so many of our stitch encyclopedias. So it's not run-of-the-mill at all. The stitches are mostly clear enough that someone with a little experience could pick it up and begin stitching...but I wouldn't recommend it to brand new stitchers unless you are adept at picking up unfamiliar technique books and jumping into it. The book has the unusual benefit of listing all the stitches in order in the Table of Contents and then in alphabetical order in the Index. I count roughly over 100 stitches including variations and helpful techniques like changing thread colors and turning corners, something sadly lacking in the vast majority of stitch encyclopedias. But the 3-star elements are these: the very first chapter is "10 Common Stitches" which include: running stitch, backstitch, straight stitches, couching, outline stitch, satin stitch, French and bullion knots, chain stitch, and lazy daisy. Cross stitch doesn't crop up until 2/3 through the book but, by far, this stitch is the most familiar to us and among the most basic, common and easy stitches. Second, while the drawings are really well-done, often the beginning of a stitch shown by a disembodied hand is a little difficult to make out. This is quickly overcome--and most of the stitches are laid out in a surprisingly good number of diagrams; but there are times where a key step is tantalizingly missing. For example, my go-to stitch for determining the ease of learning stitches is the bullion. This is not a "common" stitch but rather an intermediate one. While this matches the number of steps--7--I've found in the most clear diagramming, how you're to hold down the wraps around the needle as you carefully draw it through is not clear. And there is a small disconnect in how you slowly pull up and tighten the thread as you reinsert it into the hole from which you started. (A GREAT thing, however, is the little star which keeps track of this hole--no book I've seen makes this so clear.) The third complaint is that there are drawings of base lines upon which you gauge the placement and size of the stitches...but it's entirely unclear if you're to draw these on with the appropriate marker, pencil or pen discussed to trace out the drawings of the embroidery. Fourth--and this is a biggie if you're not already a stitcher--it is entirely unclear if these stitches are for counted thread, free-style or both. It would seem to be for the first because the fabrics shown are plain-weave, even-weave, aida and mesh canvas, all of which are counted. And some of the areas of stitches are shown on grids. But felt and "knit fabric" (unclear if this is like duplicate stitch) are also shown. The needles and pins described are sharp with the exception of "finishing needles" which you can make out are tapestry needles--the ones appropriate for counted thread because they don't pierce the threads of the fiber or fabric. The needles that are identified as for cross stitch because they have blunt ends are labeled "chenille" which are actually sharp. These needles are stated to range in size from 14 to 26. But the range is actually larger. On the other hand, the one page showing an overall pattern for embroidery has no grid in sight but only a drawing traced onto fabric. Finally, the threads shown are not the standard DMC or Anchor brands or others we're used to but something labeled "GR." It's easy to state that pearl cotton comes in sizes 3, 5, 8, 12 (and recently I've heard of 16) but here it is just mentioned in passing that it comes in different weights and only one unidentified thickness is displayed. There is no discussion of metallic threads which is surprising since much couching and much Japanese embroidery involve them. I hope this isn't whining. As an advanced stitcher, this is a great book for me. And I note that the title of the book is "Essential" embroidery stitches and not "Beginner" which is an important distinction. The vast majority of stitches are really well diagrammed so this has joined the top 10 or so of my dozens of stitch guides, dictionaries and encyclopedias. I believe everyone could learn something from this book. 4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Perfect for basic embroidery stitches By Grandma Vic I bought all three of these books--main review under crochet. Beautifully illustrated, and easy to follow instructions for basic embroidery. Again, not a project book--just the stitches. More like a pamphlet than an actual book--easy to throw in a project bag for quick reference. 4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Four Stars By _cranewife_ Simple, straight-forward and attractively presented.

This gorgeously illustrated stitch guide for embroidery is as timeless as the craft itself. The slender volume presents the fundamental stitches for needlecraft in simple, easy-to-follow color illustrations. The encyclopedic, dip-in, dip-out approach is well-suited for beginners looking to build a foundation of stitch techniques as well as seasoned crafters who will love keeping these handsome reference guides on their shelves. Classically designed and packaged as lovely jacketed paperbacks the Stitch Encyclopedias (Crochet, Embroidery, and Knitting) make a memorable gift for crafters and visual learners and can be enjoyed individually or as an attractive set.