

## Slow Stitch - Prompt 1

### GET COMFORTABLE

Welcome to day one of our project. Start by drawing 12 circles onto your fabric/fabric pieces. Use an upturned mug as a template. They can be uniformly spaced or random. Select the one colour of thread to use throughout the project. Today is about finding your rhythm with running stitch. Thread your needle with an arm's length of thread. Tie a knot in the end or start with a couple of tiny stitches, one on top of the other and stitch. Just running stitch in lines, back and forth across your circle. Don't be tempted to stitch in circles or 'create' anything at this point. Evenness of stitches is unimportant. This prompt is less about an end result and more about you getting comfortable with your needle and fabric. Turn your fabric around to see what works. If you are new to sewing start by stitching right to left if you are right handed and vice versa. Once comfortable with this you might try stitching towards or away from you. How does this affect your stitches? Is it more, or less, comfortable? Explore loading more stitches onto the needle. If you are proficient in running stitch already don't feel this isn't for you. As you stitch across your circle try to be present, reflecting on the rhythm of each stitch. Can you make this more comfortable? Are you able to become totally immersed in the process, be in a 'flow' state of mind. Running stitch is the foundation of what we will be creating over the coming days. Get comfortable with it. And trust that you will get more comfortable and confident every time you pick up your slow stitching.

Susan

To view the video introducing this project please head to [www.normalfest.co.uk](http://www.normalfest.co.uk)

## Slow Stitch - Prompt 2

### STITCH LENGTH

Today is all about experimenting with stitch length. Still working in lines explore how different your running stitch can be. Very long stitches and tiny stitches. Even and uneven stitches. What about the spaces between the stitches? How does it change things? Turn your work over and see how different it looks on the reverse. Do you find yourself preferring a particular stitch length? If so, why is that? Is it the rhythm of stitching it or the look? Something else? Finally, does today's stitching feel more comfortable than yesterday? Are you slowing down and enjoying the process, finding your flow or are you completing a task?

Susan

### Slow Stitch - Prompt 3

#### LINE

How many ways can you create a more solid line using running stitch? Experiment with the space between the stitches. How small can you make that? Sew back and forth over your line until it becomes more solid. Focus on the rhythm of your stitch rather than filling gaps and see how expressive your line becomes. Try another line where you do focus on filling the gaps on the return. What if you double up your thread? Play with gently curving lines.

As you stitch remember to check in with yourself. Are you sitting comfortably? If not, how can you get more comfortable. Which techniques do you like and which do you not? Are you in flow? If your comfort zone is that circle where would you place yourself? Are you in the centre or pushing at the boundaries? Where does your creativity sit within that circle? Are the limitations comfortable, boring or igniting the idea of what is possible? There is no right or wrong answer and your response may well shift as we move through the prompts. Some days will excite more than others. Some will get you into flow quicker and keep your attention longer. Pay attention to those times.

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### Slow Stitch - Prompt 4

#### CIRCLE

Today we will explore stitching in circles. Using any of the techniques you have tried so far. Maybe you will use the edge of the circle as your guide and move towards the centre. Perhaps you will stitch overlapping circles within the circle. What length stitch will you need to create smooth curves? Do you want to create broken or solid lines?

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### Slow Stitch - Prompt 5

#### FILL

How can you fill your circle using just running stitch? Use dense stitching to create a filled area. You might want to stitch in one direction or add a second layer in a different direction. Will you double up your thread? Is that to create more depth or fill the area quicker? Don't forget your check in reminders below.

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Slow Stitch - Prompt 6

PATTERN

Drawing on all the previous prompts use running stitch to create a pattern within your circle. Don't plan too much, if at all, but let the pattern evolve. Start with a line, straight or curved, anywhere in your circle and then go from there. Push the boundaries of what you can achieve with simple running stitch.

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Slow Stitch - Prompt 7

DRAW

Today we will draw with running stitch. Mark out a simple shape in pencil, or freehand if you wish, and draw your design with stitch. You can use a mix of solid and broken lines as long as it's running stitch.

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pushing at the boundaries? Where does your creativity sit within that circle? Are the limitations comfortable, boring or igniting the idea of what is possible? There is no right or wrong answer and your response may well shift as we move through the prompts. Some days will excite more than others. Some will get you into flow quicker and keep your attention longer. Pay attention to those times.

### Slow Stitch - Prompt 8 NEGATIVE SPACE

Let's explore another way to draw. Mark out a simple design and fill in the area surrounding it. Use any of the techniques from the previous prompts. Negative space is the space between things, or the empty or blank areas. How does the positive space, stitched area, and negative space, unstitched area, work today? Do they create balance?

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### Slow Stitch - Prompt 9 TEXT

Consider how you might use running stitch to sew a word. Maybe you want to explore one of your solid line techniques. Or perhaps use negative space. How will you fill the positive space? Simple running stitch or pattern? Your word(s) can be anything, something festive, a name or initial, or perhaps a word that reflects what 2020 has meant to you. Mark out your work with pencil and stitch your text.

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Slow Stitch - Prompt 10  
RHYTHM

Here we are on day 10 and there has been a lot of talk about rhythm and getting into flow. Today is about noticing the rhythm in your stitching. Sew running stitch back and forth and around your circle. Let it meander. Notice your mood. If you are tense is that reflected in your stitches. What about music? Try listening to music as you stitch to see what happens. Can you capture the energy and rhythm of the music in your stitching? How does the environment around you affect you? Does your mood alter during your time spent stitching? If so, how? Be present and remove any idea of outcome. As you find your flow state, notice how it feels to be lost, or held, in the process.

Susan

Slow Stitch - Prompt 11  
COLOUR

You should have been stitching in just one colour up to this point. Limitations often feel frustrating but if we choose to reframe how we think about limitations they can, in fact, be liberating, freeing us from the tedium of making decisions. Today you get to use a different colour, if you wish. How have you felt being limited to one colour? Was it liberating or frustrating? Did you stick to that rule? Choose any ONE of the previous prompts and stitch it in a different colour. You may wish to stitch in the same circle, adding a new dimension of colour.

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Slow Stitch - Prompt 12  
PLAY

Reflect on everything that you have learnt and stitched. What do you want to do more of? Do you have a design in mind? Have fun, get lost in flow, stitch, create, unwind, enjoy.

This may be the last prompt I'll be giving you but it doesn't need to be the end of the project. You may wish to revisit your favourites prompts. You might be making your circles into decorations for the tree or perhaps you have enjoyed it as a sampler or stitch journal and want to continue with it. Please do tag me @threadbarewoman and @normalfestival in your photos. We'd love to see your stitching.

Thanks for joining me in some slow stitching.

Susan

