

Picture of Finished Project: Couched Celtic Letter in the top of a 2" x 2" box

Do you need a tooth fairy box? Or a box to hold your rings by a sink or night stand? Or a box to hold that special forever gift? Stitch a quick and simple initial, pop it into the box top and you have a quick gift for someone special. Enjoy!

This example of a stitched initial was quickly done with couched threads on felt. But you could do a cross stitch on your favorite counted ground or a surface stitchery on some wonderful fabric. I thought this would make a great tooth fairy box. If one had three children or grandchildren, stitch 3 initials and swap out the stitched piece whenever a child lost a tooth! Paint it in some fancy color, add glitter and stars and Voila—a Tooth Fairy Box. Note: if using for teeth, I would paint and varnish the inside of the box and leave it plain. If using for precious items, I'd line the bottom with something soft like felt or Ultrasuede.

Supply List

ITEM	DESCRIPTION
Needles:	Couching: crewel or chenille needles—large for handling large fibers and small for couching thread
Hoop:	Definitely!
Ground Fabric:	4" square of ground fabric—you will use the center 2x2 for the box opening. But this is box dependent!
Thread:	I used: DMC Diamante (gold) for couching all threads or Kreinik Jap Gold (this sparkly thread blended in well with the shiny Kreiniks instead of couching with a flat silk thread) Kreinik 1/16" Ribbon, #12 Braid, in greens on hand
Box	Purchased box with a window in the lid. My window was just smaller than 2" x 2".
Finishing Materials:	Black paint. Stick-on shamrocks and crystals.



Picture of fibers used

INSTRUCTIONS

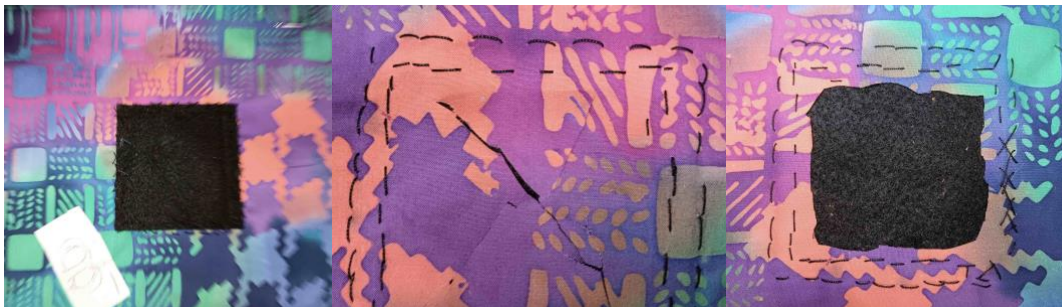


PICTURE of Finished Embroidery – Happy Shamrock Box

1. Select your alphabet. Be sure the initial fits in the window of your box (so embarrassing...)



Trace initial onto tissue paper or other method of transferring design to ground fabric.



Baste ground fabric square onto scrap cotton to provide a hoopable surface. Middle picture is of the back showing basting stitches. Picture on the right shows the back after cotton cut away to allow stitching.



Ground Fabric in Hoop with Initial on Tissue Paper pinned on.

2. If Cross Stitch, stitch the initial in the center of the ground fabric.
3. If Surface Embroidery, baste the ground fabric or felt onto a larger piece of cotton fabric that can be hooped. Cut out the back of the fabric creating a window that has your felt or ground fabric in it. Then hoop the strong cotton. (see the picture series below).
 - a. Why take this step? I want tension on the small piece of ground fabric so my stitches look nice plus I don't waste expensive ground fabric just to cut a hole in the center when I use the piece for a box window!

- b. I have also taken classes where the cotton fabric is basted to the front (on top of) of the ground fabric and then the window is cut out on the front of the ground fabric to allow it to show. If this was a large project, I would consider doing this, but it took me less than 3 hours to stitch the initial, so the piece won't get grimy in that time frame. Your choice.



4. Couching:
 - a. Transferring the design to black felt was interesting. I couldn't find my white (or yellow) tracing paper in my sewing supplies. I wound up tracing a copy of the initial onto fine paper, basting the paper to the felt, doing the outside couching stitch to establish the initial edges, and then moistening the paper to carefully tear it off around the stitches. **Pictures shown above.**
 - b. Then I stitched the rest of my Celtic initial. I started with the medium green in two places couched with fine gold filament, then couched several rows of dark green, and finished with the light green.
 - c. I wasn't stitching carefully and the felt wanted to stretch a bit. It did not stay rigid in its "window" sewn in the cotton. I think next time I would even consider putting tissue paper on the back of the felt or interface the felt to stabilize it.
5. Finish stitching and carefully cut basting stitches to lift out embroidery.
6. Trim (measure 3 times) to fit into top of box. **I did NOT glue the embroidery permanently** in place because I want to be able to swap the initials for various children or family members.
7. This is a quick stitch and should take less than 3 hours to stitch. So if you have several children or grandchildren (or nieces and nephews), you can make an initial for each one and swap the initials out in the box for each tooth lost! I did the last name beginning with "M" for many members of my extended family so the box can be moved from house to house, too.

Finishing your stitched piece

I found the small wood box at Michael's. It is a tiny box with a window opening in the top covered in unremovable plexiglass. I painted it with black acrylic paint. Use a small brush, especially around the unremovable plexiglass! For the top finish coat I used a glitter satin. Then I went into my craft box and found little crystals to stick on and then found a package of shamrocks to stick on! I even found some bright green ribbon, but couldn't find a real use for it.

This makes a useful tooth fairy (or ring box) that I could easily see as a gift for a friend.

Congratulations on another EGA SAL finished project! Hope you enjoyed it and join us again next month on the EGA Stitch-a-Long.