

## TAKE AND MAKE: Homeschool: Hand-Sewn Charms (Ages 7 Up)

Watch the Simple Hand Sewing program video and project tutorial on YouTube:

[tinyurl.com/PPLDHomeschoolPlaylist](https://tinyurl.com/PPLDHomeschoolPlaylist)



Hand-sewing is a great skill to know and can be used for everything from mending clothes (fixing holes or tears) to making art (quilting, embroidery, bookbinding, and more). In this project, you will learn how to thread a needle, sew basic stitches, design your own pattern, and make a custom hand-sewn wooden charm. Then you can use your skills to experiment with sewing your own projects!

### Supplies Included

Needle  
Embroidery thread  
Threader  
2 wooden charms  
2 sheets paper templates

### Supplies from Home

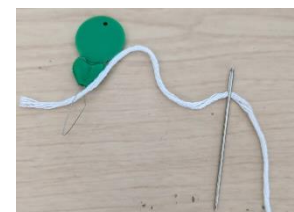
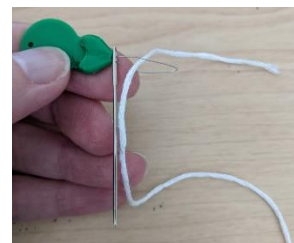
Scissors  
Drawing supplies

### Getting the Thread Ready

- Pick a color and measure out about 2 feet of thread (your thread should not be super long because it will get tangled and make sewing hard, but it should not be super short either because it could come off the needle or run out while sewing).

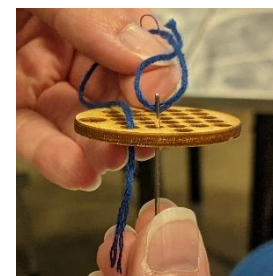
### Threading the Needle

- Put the thread through the eye of the needle. There are two ways that you can do this:
  - 1) Pinch the thread between your fingers and poke it through the eye of the needle. It helps to wet the tip of the thread to make it easier to push it through. Pull the thread through until there are about 4 inches of thread on the other side of the eye.
  - 2) Use a threader to make it easier. Poke the loop of the threader through the eye of the needle. Now put your thread through this much bigger wire loop, and then pull the threader back through the eye of the needle (it will take the thread with it). Pull until there are about 4 inches of thread hanging on the other side. Now your needle is threaded!



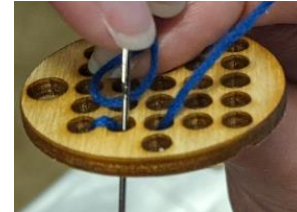
### Starting to Sew

- Start from the bottom side of the charm and push the needle up through a hole at the edge of the charm. Keep pulling until you have left about 2-3 inches of thread dangling beneath the charm. Hold onto that for now, and then push the needle down through a hole that is next to it.
- Now we need to secure that dangling thread. Usually, when you sew by hand, you tie a knot at the bottom of the thread before you start sewing to hold the thread in place and keep it from coming through the fabric. Since we're sewing on wood charms today, the knot wouldn't be big enough to hold it on. Instead, you can tie a knot on the back of the charm with the tail end the thread and the needle end of the thread.



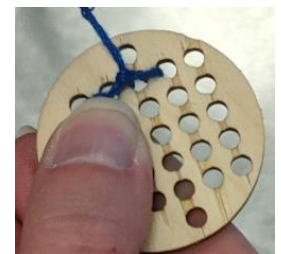
## Sewing a Straight Stitch and a Back Stitch

- You've already made one stitch by coming up through a hole from the bottom and going down into the next hole from the top. If you keep doing this (coming up through the next hole, going down through the hole after that), you are doing a straight stitch. This common stitch is great to know for connecting two pieces of fabric.
- Do you see how there are gaps between each stitch when we do a straight stitch? That can work for some designs, but if you want to sew a design with no gaps between stitches, you'll want to use a backstitch. The backstitch is a way to fill in those holes (it looks like you're sewing backwards, which is where the name comes from). After you sew one stitch, come up with the needle through the next hole and then poke it down through the hole with the first stitch. Then come back up two holes over and go back to the previous stitch. Now you can make a complete line without any gaps.
- Spend a little time practicing these two stitches until you feel comfortable with them!



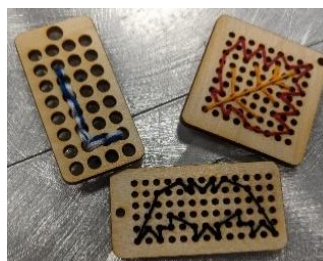
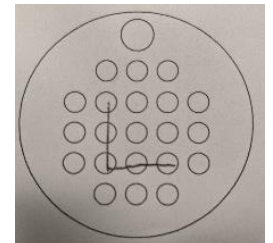
## Tying Off

- Now that you've learned the two types of stitches we'll be using today, let's tie off! If you were sewing on fabric, you would poke the needle down through the fabric and then tie a knot on the back side. Since we're using wood, just like before, push the needle down through a hole one last time, then poke it under one of the stitches on the back side and tie a knot to hold it in place. Now trim off the extra thread, and you're done!
- If you want to reuse this same charm for your design afterwards, just cut all the threads with a pair of scissors and pull them out.



## Planning Your Design

- Take the paper template and drawing supplies. The templates have a perfect copy of the holes on the charms, so you can connect the holes to make a pattern and then sew it step by step. If you want to use 2 different colors of thread, draw it in 2 colors as well!
- Decide which stitch you want to use based on whether you need a gap between holes or not. Remember: a straight stitch will leave gaps, while a backstitch will be an unbroken line.
- Once you have your pattern ready to go, thread your needle and use the techniques we learned to get started!



**Did you know? The Makerspaces at Sand Creek Library, East Library, Library 21c, and Manitou Springs Library all have sewing and embroidery machines.** Anyone age 9 and up can visit the Makerspaces and use the tools in them. If you're under 12, you'll need a parent or guardian to be with you. To learn more, visit [research.ppld.org/sewing](https://research.ppld.org/sewing).