
Thread Painting: Embroider Spring Blooms with Anna Hultin of OlanderCO Embroidery

Chapter 1 - Thread Painting: Embroider Spring Blooms

Overview

(upbeat music) - I'm Anna Hultin from OlanderCo Embroidery. I'm an embroidery artist based out of Colorado, and all of my work is an attempt to relate to the land I live on in some way, shape, or form. I take traditional embroidery stitches, and use them in very untraditional ways, in a style that I call thread painting. In thread painting, you use different tones and values of a color to build dimension and a realistic quality to the work. I think of my stitches more as brushstrokes. I'm going to teach you two simple embroidery stitches, the back stitch and the satin stitch, and you're going to use them to create a poppy and sweet pea thread painting. Whether you're a beginner or an expert, I will guide you through everything you need to know, from transferring your pattern, to stitching on your labels, to backing your hoop. If you've ever fallen in love with the minimalistic beauty of botanical drawing, you're going to love exploring that style with thread. (upbeat music)

Materials

- Let's go over our materials. You'll need two five-inch embroidery hoops. Now, when you are buying your embroidery hoops, it is important to check them for any flaws. What you are looking for is the space between the inner hoop and outer hoop, you don't want there to be any gaps in there. You can see on this one, this big gap right here? That is not good. That is where my fabric is going to pull and cinch as I'm stitching. So don't get embroidery hoops with this gap in it. You'll need six pieces of undyed cotton solid, cut to 7 1/2-inch squares. Your embroidery threads that are listed on your color guide. Your pdfs printed out. The first page can be on regular paper, the second and third page need to be printed on card stock. A size five embroidery needle, an X-Acto knife, a water-soluble marker, a plastic bobbin or something to wrap your embroidery thread around. You can use a clothespin, or if you choose not to, you don't actually have to wrap it, but it might get a little tangled on you. A ruler, scissors. If you prefer embroidery scissors, those work fine, but I tend to just use my larger ones. A LightPad, or a window will work fine, and a piece of felt for covering the backs of your hoop.

Practice, prepare hoop, and transfer pattern

- First, I'm going to teach you the embroidery stitches you have to know and then we will get our hoops ready to start on our flowers. You're going to get two pieces of your cotton solid and put it inside your embroidery hoop. I always like to stitch on two pieces of fabric, because it feels really sturdy. And it looks nice when it's done, because you don't see the threads through the back of the hoop. We're going to start with one of the most basic embroidery stitches, the backstitch. Take your water soluble marker and draw a line. My thread's already on a bobbin and I'm going to show you how to wind your own thread on your bobbin. First, take off your labels. Then find the circle. All embroidery skeins are wound in a circle like this. And then I like to put it over one of my wrists and find the loose end and simply wind it around. Just tuck in the loose end when you're done and make sure that you label the number in one of these little spots here with something like a Sharpie. And that way you'll be able to keep track of all of your thread numbers. For our practice stitches I want us to use a 900 and a 919 thread. We'll start with our 900. All embroidery thread comes in six strands, so there are six tiny little threads in here. We want to separate out a single thread. Do this

and use your left hand to secure the other threads while you pull one loose. You're going to pull about two to three arms lengths and then cut it. Put the two loose ends through the eye of your needle and pull it so that your looped end is just a little bit longer than the other end. Then tie a knot on the looped end. We're gonna tie about two to three knots. And that will help secure our thread on the back of our hoop. For our backstitch you're going to bring your needle up about 1/4 of an inch away from the right side of your line. Pull it all the way through until that knot catches and then put your needle down on the right side of that line and bring it up towards the left of where you originally had your thread come out and pull it secure. Now, put your needle back down that original hole and up. I'm doing this all in the same motion. You can also push your needle down, pull it through, and push it up, pull it through in separate motions like that. It's totally up to you. Beginners often like to do it in separate motions, but you just do what is most comfortable to you. When I am trying to do it in one motion I'm actually using my middle finger to sort of push up the tip of my needle to help it get through. Because I do this a lot my fabric does come loose as I'm stitching. So every few stitches I like to just retighten my fabric. Once you feel comfortable with a straight line I want you to take your marker and give yourself a few dashed lines. We are sometimes going to use a traditional backstitch in our projects, but sometimes we're going to be a little untraditional and separate out different stitches. And I'd like to practice that now. We're going to use the same method, bringing our needle up on the bottom of these little lines and then down through the top. I'm gonna find another bottom of my line to bring up my needle, so I'm going to come up through this one. These are separate little backstitches. A lot of the embroidery we're doing takes traditional embroidery stitches and then uses them in very untraditional ways. Once you feel like you have mastered your backstitch, we are going to move onto our satin stitch. To do this you can draw yourself a little circle or oval with your marker. And in a satin stitch we use long stitches to fill in an entire shape. And it kind of looks like satin when we're done, which is how it gets its name. I'm bringing my needle up on one side of my circle and I'm going back down on the other side. Now, I'm bringing my needle up as close as I can come to this original hole right there when I'm coming up through the back. The trick with a satin stitch is getting those little points where you're coming up and going back down really close, but not overlapping. This is a constant trial and error and that's why we're practicing. Just like with my backstitch, I can also do this in one motion where I go down and up. I tend to like doing this, because it's just a little more efficient. One thing to keep in mind for your satin stitch is that you want to choose a consistent point on your line where you are going in and coming back up. What I mean by that is I am going through the exact middle of my blue mark here. I'm not going on the outer edge or the inner edge, I'm going through the middle and I'm trying to do that every time. That will give me a really consistent, unwobbly circle. And you can choose to do it on the outside of the line or the inside of the line, but whatever you choose, make sure it's consistent. Often when I'm satin stitching I have little gaps that happen between my stitches where I didn't come quite close enough to that previous stitch and that's a really easy problem to fix. All I have to do is go backwards. Bring my needle up in that little section that I missed and just patch it up. Embroidery is surprisingly forgiving. Once you feel comfortable with the satin stitch I'm going to teach you how to blend a satin stitch. This is really where we start to come into our thread painting. You're going to give yourself a shape kind of like the top of an umbrella. I am going to do a satin stitch along here with my 900 thread and I'm going to end it at random points as I go, but I'm going to stay consistent with where it begins along this line. You'll see what I mean. It doesn't really matter where I am bringing up my needle, it just matters where I am putting it down. I am patching as I go, because I have a big old gap there. Notice that you can satin stitch

along a curve. You sort of pivot your stitches around a point. So I'm gonna come through this hole a few times and pivot my outer stitch around it as I go. Once you have a fair amount of your line filled in you can stop, tie off your thread by going under some of the stitching on the back a few times to make a loop, pull your needle to make a knot and secure it. When we are stitching sometimes we wanna reuse our thread, so what we're going to do is actually save it by pulling it up through the left-hand top corner of our outer fabric. Let's get ourselves some of the 919 thread onto our needle. You're going to take that 919 thread and you're going to bring it up a little ways down from those original stitches. And what we're doing here is we're literally blending two colors together. These two colors are really similar, but they are different. And when I stitch them in this way they look like they vary from one color and then it blends into the next. You're going to bring up your 919 and kind of tuck it into random places along your 900 color. It's important that where you're bringing it down is not a straight line or else it will look like you have a big chunk of your 919 and then a big chunk of your 900. You want to blend them, which means we're going to go in different spots and they kind of look like two almost hands coming together like this. We are going to be using this technique a lot in our flowers to get them to look realistic. Once you feel confident with this blended satin stitch you're ready to transfer your pattern into your final hoops. You can just discard your practice fabric, use it for another project, whatever you wanna do. Now, we're taking our other pieces of our cotton solid and you should have four pieces left. We're going to do one hoop first and then the next. You're going to separate your fabric. Mine's just folded in half. You're going to want a single layer of fabric in your hoop for transferring your pattern. When you put your fabric in you will notice these lines vertical and horizontal on your fabric. You wanna make sure that they are perpendicular with each other and that they're straight up and down inside your hoop. You also wanna make sure that your hoop is nice and tight or else our pattern will end up getting a little bit warped. You can tighten the hardware on your hoop as needed. I'm going to do this on both of my hoops. You might notice that your fabric is a little wrinkly and you might be tempted to iron it, but you don't have to iron it because we have a trick to take care of that at the very end of our project. Get your patterns and a light pad, or if you have a window that will work fine too. You just need something that's going to shine light through your paper and through your fabric. Take your hoop and flip it over. One note on this is to make sure that you have printed this at 100% on your scale on your printer. Do not scale to fit or else your circle will be smaller than five inches and it will be hard to do. Line up your hoop, making sure still that these lines of my fabric are straight up and down. Take your water soluble marker and go ahead and trace the pattern. After you're done with your sweet pea, switch to your poppy. On your poppy you have all these tiny little dashed lines on our pods, don't worry about tracing those. You will never be able to trace those with this giant marker. Just trace the outline of the pod. Our poppies are in the style of botanical drawing. And what's important about botanical drawing is that it shows the plant in many different phases of its bloom, which is why we have pods along with the actual bloomed flower and the leaves. Botanical drawing tries to show every part of the flower in all phases. Once we're done tracing our pattern we need to put our fabric back in the hoop the way it's supposed to be. Take your fabric out, lay your blank piece of fabric down and your pattern piece of fabric over it. It's nice because we have this little line here from when we traced it, so just try to line it up as best you can. It might seem like there's a lot of space at the bottom, but remember, we are putting a label down here. Also, we are going to be able to make last minute adjustments once we're done stitching. So don't sweat it too much about getting your pattern in the exact right spot. Make sure your fabric is as tight as humanly possible by pulling it. This is pretty tight, but you can pull it, tighten your hardware, and pull it again to make

sure it's as tight as you can get it. Repeat this with your poppy. If you're like me and just had a folded piece of fabric, you're just gonna refold it. Our hoops are ready to begin stitching.

Oriental Poppy

- Let's begin stitching our poppy. You're going to want to start with your 900 color thread, and you're going to want your color guide handy, because we are going to be using all of these threads in this order. Thread your needle with your 900 orange. I always like to start with the flower petals on my poppy, but that's just because they take the longest and once you complete those, the rest of it comes together pretty quickly. We're going to start with that blended satin stitch that we practiced, and we're going to begin with our top petal right here. I like to start on the bottom of my petal and go along the edge for my first stitch. Your orange is going to come about this far down along your petal, a little less than halfway. We are going to be doing our orange, our mid-tone red, and then our dark red on the bottom, and we're going to blend all three colors together. Keep that in mind as you begin. You're going to pivot this satin stitch around this single point, so it's going to come here and it's going to pivot around until it becomes a straight satin stitch. So you're just going to bring your needle up through that same hole a few times to do that. The nice thing about thread painting is that we are going to be layering a lot of different colors on every part of this, so you don't have to worry too much about the neatness of your satin stitches right now. I do still like to go back and fill in any large gaps, but if it's a little messy and untidy, that actually is fine, so don't worry too much. When you're satin stitching, you wanna be careful to pull it snug, but not too tight, or else you get a wrinkle in your fabric that is not so nice to look at. Now, instead of switching threads to continue on this petal, I'm actually going to fill in all of the areas that are going to have this orange color so I don't have to switch out my thread a lot. This is where you're going to look at your color guide. We have our orange here at the top of this petal. This entire petal is going to be orange, and then these lines are going to be little highlights we do later. This inner petal starts with orange and then fades to other colors, so we'll just do this little section. The outer edge of this petal is going to be our orange, and the top of this petal. I like to move on to my large outer petal next. Remember to choose consistent points on your line to put your needle down and bring it back up. That will make your poppy look like the pattern. Continue stitching this petal and fill in all of the orange. You can see on this hoop where I have completed all of my orange. Yours should look like this when you're done. After you're done with your orange thread, don't cut it off quite yet. You're going to tie it off in the back, and then you're going to save your thread like I talked about earlier, by pushing it through that top left corner of your outer fabric. Let's switch to our 919 mid-tone red. We're going back up to that first petal, and we're going to do that blended satin stitch that we practiced. You're actually going to bring it up in the orange, and back down a little more than halfway down your petal. Remember to choose random points to bring up your needle so that you don't have a straight line of that mid-tone red, but rather a more blended look. So sometimes I'm going to bring it pretty far up my orange, and sometimes it'll be a little bit lower. That variation is the key to making it look natural. Once we're done with that top petal, we'll move on to this central petal right here. I'm going to start a little ways in on my orange with a few stitches, one around here, here, and then I will begin a solid patch of that mid-tone red. This really helps make it look blended. We're doing another pivot here where I'm going in through the same hole and then out in a bit of an arc away from that hole. That's far enough for our mid-tone red on that petal. Let's move on up to this one right here. We're going to fill in this entire rest of this petal with our mid-tone red. We're gonna start on this little kind of bump here with tiny little stitches and then work our way over. You might notice gaps that

happen as you're pushing your thread between your previous stitches. Don't worry about those gaps. Like I said, we are gonna be going over this with a lot more color once we get the base down. These are just forming the base colors for our petals. Now we're going to bring our mid-tone red just almost to the end of this petal. We'll stop just before the edge of it. I like to start right here and work my way up. Tie off your thread and save it for later, just like we did with our orange. Grab your 3857, your dark red. We're going to use our dark red to fill in the rest of our petals. This is always an exciting part, because it's when you can start to see our blending really start to take form, and it really starts to feel like painting at this point. This is still our blended satin stitch, and remember to come up in those random points in your mid-tone red, or else it will look like three lines of color instead of one petal that is gradated and blending from one color to the next. Let's move on to this middle petal here. Once again, we're gonna to start a little ways in on this mid-tone red so that it looks blended. You have to rotate your hoop quite a few times to find an angle that works for you for satin stitching, so just play with that. If it feels uncomfortable, turn your hoop around until it feels right. I'm going to fill in a few gaps that I have here. Don't feel bad about gaps. I've been stitching for over four years and I still have gaps all the time. It's just a part of embroidery life. Let's finish up our dark red with the very tip of this petal. What we're going to do now is take our dark red and add a few little details in our petals. The thing about poppies that makes them so special is that their flowers are like almost wrinkly, and we wanna add some of those wrinkles by adding some dark lines throughout the petals. So I'm going to bring up my dark thread low on this petal, and go all the way up to the top. I'm gonna do that in a few random places. I'm also gonna do that in this petal that's all orange right now. I just wanna add some of those wrinkles by adding a few dark lines here and there. Some can go the entire length of the stitch, some can just come halfway. That variation, once again, is gonna make it look life-like. I'm also gonna add some into this petal and then into this one I'm going to save my dark red thread in case I decide I want it for anything else. Now I wanna add back in a little bit of my orange, so you're just going to pull it back through your fabric and re-thread your needle. I like to bring some of my orange all the way down onto my dark red on a few places. This starts to make it look like there's light bouncing off of these petals. I'm going to do that on this petal as well. Save that orange just in case you decide you want it later. I do actually want a little bit of dark red right along here, just to make that petal more defined. We're just gonna do a line coming along the edge here. Tie it off. Grab your 3827 and your 3855. We're going to add a few highlights with these colors. You'll see that it's just going to be a few stitches, but it really makes a world of difference on this flower. We'll start with our 3827, which I call my mid-tone yellow. These are not official DMC names, by the way, these are just names that I have come up with for the purpose of our project. I'm going to add a few highlights on my petals. Some can be longer than others. Go ahead and switch to your 3855. This yellow is just a little bit brighter, so we're going to add a few highlights and definition on our petals by bringing it along the edge of this one. This is a good time to find any gaps where your satin stitches might not have met completely, and just cover them up. I like to add a few along this petal as well. And just two little stitches down here to kind of go along this curve. I might wanna add one more highlight up here at the top of my petal. Tie it off and get your black. For the center of our flower, we're just going to be doing a normal old satin stitch to cover this area. I like to start on the bottom and work my way up. Make sure you are bringing your stitch as close as you can to the base of this petal so you don't have a white gap between the two areas. Now that we're done with this flower, and you should feel super proud of yourself, because this was hard to do, and you did a great job, we are going to start on our leaves. You're going to get your 936, your mid-tone green, and we are going to be doing a satin stitch on

our leaves starting from the outside of the petal and working our way to this midline. You're going to pivot your stitches as needed to fit inside your shape and fill it in all the way. When our leaves have this point that kind of goes upward like this, you're going to get as close to that point as you can with your stitches, and then you'll go back over them to really make that point happen. I'll show you what I mean. Now that I've filled in most of this leaf, I'm going to come to that point and connect it back to my leaf. We're going to do that same thing on this leaf. When I get to the top of my leaf, I'm going to bring my stitches down along here and rotate around this whole shape. I have a loose thread here. You're going to get your needle on that last stitch, the loose part is in the stitch before that, so I'm going to gently pull on that stitch until the one before is snug, and then readjust that stitch and keep going. Now I'm just going to work my way down the other side of the leaf. Continue stitching all the way down this leaf and use the same method for our second leaf. On this hoop, you can see that I've already finished my two leaves with my mid-tone green. While you still have your mid-tone green all threaded up, we are going to stitch the stems, and then we'll move on to the pods. The stems are going to be back stitches. Your stitch length is going to vary based on how curvy or straight your line is. The straighter it is, the longer your stitches can be, The curvier it is, the shorter they'll be. As I come near this curve up by my flower, my stitches are gonna get a lot shorter. My fabric is puckering quite a bit right here. Just try to straighten it as much as you can. That little pucker that's not coming out when I release the fabric will come out at the very end of our project, so don't worry too much if you have a few of those little tiny puckers. Tie off your mid-tone green. We will need it again later, but I always like to tie off my thread before I put it through the upper left hand corner in case I do end up cutting it. Then I know that it's secured. Go ahead and grab your 3052 light green, because we are going to be using it to satin stitch our pods. We're going to be using our light green on this pod right there, and on those two spots, and our mid-tone green on these back areas. These are just plain old satin stitches, nice and simple. I told you it got easier after the petals. When you're stitching these, they aren't going to look super defined. They're kind of going to blur together a little bit, and that's fine. We are going to be outlining them with our dark green at the end, and that will give them a lot of definition, so don't worry too much if it kind of looks like a big green blob right now. For this larger pod, I like to start in the middle and stitch out to the left, and then come back to the middle and stitch my way out to the right. This helps me keep it symmetrical. Before I move on to the rest of the pods, I'm actually going to keep my light green and do these little leaves in here. We're just going to use a satin stitch again to fill these in. Once again, don't worry that these look like big green blobs right now. On this pod, only this left hand leaf is going to be our light green. Before we take off this light green, we are just going to add our highlights to our leaves. We just wanna give it a little bit more dimension. So take your light green and just add a few lines on each leaf following its contours and curves. Now, on these two bottom parts of this leaf, I like to kind of fill this area in with my light green, because it makes it look like the leaf is kind of rolled or turning over. It gives it a little extra dimension. Now we are ready to tie off that light green. Let's take that 936 mid-tone green again from the back and re-thread our needle, and now we're just filling in the rest of our pods and this last little leaf. Back to our satin stitch. Tie off that mid-tone green and grab your 500 dark green, thread your needle. Now we are going to give these pods some more definition. So we are going to outline this pod, and give a little outlines to the other ones as well. This is going to be a back stitch, and we're going to do varied lengths on that back stitch again, depending on how curvy or straight we need it. This is always one of my favorite parts, because it just gives it a lot of definition and kind of pulls the whole thing together with just a few stitches. It's really rewarding. Let's add some definition to these

leaves here, make it stand out from the rest of the pod. Let's move on to our leaves and add some shadows to the bottoms of our leaves with that dark green. Just a few lines on each leaf segment works nicely. You don't have to do it to every single leaf segment, but try to do most of them. Sometimes I like to go up the edge of the leaf right here as well. In general, we're looking for areas that are not defined or that don't stand out very well. For example, this leaf kind of looks like it's part of the stem behind it. I can use my dark green to make it stand out from that stem and make it really clear what is the leaf and what is the stem. That's really the purpose of these finishing touches are to give it definition and shape. I also like to take my dark green and kind of come along this middle vein of the leaf. The other thing we get to do with these finishing touches is we get to kind of fine tune any satin stitches that we aren't super happy with. For example, this satin stitch to me looks a little choppy and I'm not loving it, so I can just cover it up with my dark green. Now it looks nice and smooth. I'm also going to go on the inside of where we had that light area on our leaves and create a little shadow effect next to it. That will really make it look like that little part of the leaf is upturned and curled over. Tie off your dark green thread, get your 3013 highlight green. This is what we're going to use for the fuzz of our pods. If you've ever looked at poppy flower pods, they are super fuzzy, and we really wanna try to capture that with this. So what we're going to do is use a single thread, unwind a bit of your thread, this time putting one end of our thread through our needle, and we're just going to knot the other end. Now, we'll to do quite a few knots to get it to catch on our fabric, so knot it four or five times. We are just going to do little individual back stitches all the way along the edges of our pods to make it look like they have fuzz. We're going to go inside our pod and put some fuzz on the edge of this middle one. Let's do the same thing for our small pod over here. Tie off your highlight green. Our poppy is done and we are ready to move on to our sweet pea.

Sweet Pea

- Let's begin on our sweet pea. You're going to want your color guide and pattern handy while you're stitching. And you're going to grab your 3826 mid-tone purple thread. I always like to begin with the petals, just like we did on the poppy. And we're going to fill in the base of our petals with this color. And this is going to become a blended satin stitch. Remember that we are going to be layering a lot of colors here. So you don't have to worry too much about getting it perfect. I'm coming up about halfway on these little petals on this top flower. Go ahead and fill in the other petals. You're going to fill in the bottom of this one. This one right here. And right here with your mid-tone purple. When you're done, it will look like mine here, where I've already completed these stitches. Go ahead and grab your 223, your pink. We're going to fill in the rest of our petals, giving it that base color before we add our details. Remember when you're blending your satin stitches, you're going to vary the points where you go from your pink to your mid-tone purple so that it doesn't form a straight line, but looks natural. We're going to leave this little area blank for right now because we're going to be filling that in with a darker grayish purple in a little bit. Don't forget to come up on those consistent points on your blue line so that you really capture the shape of this petal. This is what gives that sweet pea a really distinctive look from other flowers. They have these sort of wavy top petal flowers that are really interesting. When you are pivoting like we are around this point, you can see that it does kind of start to form that straight line that we're avoiding. And that's okay here, because we are actually going to be putting a lot of other color over it. And in this case, we can hide that. So don't worry too much if that happens on yours. Sometimes you get these little knots that happen. And the best way to get rid of them is not to force them through the fabric,

but actually to pull on both sides at the same time. And they usually will come undone for you. We're going to stop here on this left petal because we'll fill this in with that darker gray again. And we'll move on. Starting a little bit inward on this right petal, because right here, we're going to be filling in with a different color as well. If one of your threads becomes looser than the other because we're stitching with two threads. And one of them sometimes becomes looser, set your needle down and separate your threads. Pull on one, and then the other to see which one it is. It was my right one. Now that they're even, I'm going to actually bring my needle all the way down to my fabric. You can see how uneven that was there. Bring it all the way down. Straighten out the rest of my thread and then bring it back up. This should keep that from happening again. On this little petal here, we're just going to do the pink kind of coming from the purple and up to the tip, but we're going to leave this spot blank. On this bottom one here, we're going to do a similar thing and just bring up our pink along the bottom. On these two little pods up here that are flowers that haven't quite bloomed yet. We're just going to add a little bit of this pink just on the very tip of them. Remember, all of this is that blended satin stitch. So don't worry about getting it perfect. Tie off your pink and save it for later. Go ahead and grab your 317 gray purple, which is kind of this darker purple. And we're going to give our flowers some definition. Let's start by adding it right here to give this one a little bit of a shadow. If your stitches go down into this part where we're going to have our green leaves coming up, don't worry too much about it. 'Cause that green can cover up any of these. Remember to rotate your hoop until you find an angle that's comfortable for you to stitch in. We're going to add a little bit of that gray along that bottom edge. Kinda covering up that line that I wasn't super happy with. And then we're going to fill in this little area here. This is when our stitches really start to feel like brush strokes with paint, more than embroidery stitches. Add a few dark stitches along the bottom of this petal. Giving it some definition. And do the same thing on this petal down here. Using it to kind of outline the shape a little bit. Tie off your gray purple. Save it for later. Grab your 3743, your light purple. We're gonna add some highlights with this. We're going to begin on the outer edge of this flower and add a few little highlights in this one. You really want your sweet pea to look smooth. And the way I do this when I'm stitching is I make sure my stitches are following the curves of the petals and not going in different directions. That helps it look really nice and smooth and makes it look very painterly. Going to add just one or two lines of highlight in here. I'm going to transition this pink into my light purple on these little pods. And just finish those ones up by adding a few stitches. I'm not super happy with the difference in tone here how this looks very separate from this. So I'm going to take that light purple and just kind of bring one stitch a little bit further up. And that will help that transition happen a little bit better. I'm just going to add a few highlights into these larger petals and then fill in this area with highlights as well. This is always the funnest part for me because we've worked really hard to build up those base colors. And with just a few little stitches on top, this flower starts to become really lifelike. I think it's really rewarding. We're also just going to add a little bit of this light purple right here to make it look like this petal is curling up and we can see the underside of it. And it's a lighter purple. Save that light purple for later. We might not be using all these threads again, but we might need some of them. And I like to save them all just in case. Grab your 3607 fuchsia color. This, to me, is the color that I think of when I think of sweet peas. Notice that the rest of the flower is really kind of this neutral colors, with pinks and purples, but nothing this bright. We're just going to use this thread to sort of highlight some places and to really give it that sweet pea characteristic color. We're going to start by filling in this little blank area. And then we're just going to add some highlights around these larger petals. If your thread gets tangled like this, don't force it through. I've tried to do that a lot

and it never goes well. Just untangle it. And then the tail of my thread's getting a little tangley. So just snip it off if you need to, to keep it from happening again. If you have any parts of your flower right now that you're not happy with, where the two colors come together, you can use this fuchsia to kind of cover up spots. Do a little editing. This form of embroidery is very forgiving in that way. Now we talked about going in the direction of the petals with your stitches. But, when I'm adding these finishing details, it's okay to go horizontal compared to your vertical stitches to give it that outline. That's fine to do once in a while. You just don't wanna do it too much or it starts to look more cartoony rather than realistic. Tie off your fuchsia. And then turn your hoop over. And this is when I like to just kind of observe it, look at it, see if there's any parts I'm not happy with. See if there's any more blending I want to do. Right now, I'm pretty happy with mine, but I'm not loving the way that this dark purplish gray fades over into this pink area. So I'm actually gonna go back to my original color. My mid-tone purple. Find it on my little color palette here. This is why we save these. So you have lots of choices to choose from. Gonna take my mid-tone purple out. Rethread my needle. And I'm just gonna add a few stitches right here to blend those two colors together. I feel the same way about this transition down here. So I'm gonna use my mid tone purple and do the same thing. Your spots might be different than mine. So I want you to look at yours and decide any spots that you are not happy with and take your threads. Choose one or two, and just kinda go over them. It's kind of like combing it out almost. I'm also not happy with the way that this isn't very smooth. It's not showing the shape that I want it to. So I'm going to take my purple and just kind of outline it along the edge. Now that I'm happy with my flower, I am going to tie off my final color. At this point, you can either cut these off or you can save them for later to make any edits once you're done with your entire piece. Either way is fine. I tend to save mine just in case. Go ahead and grab your 3047 light yellow. We use this just to give this flower a tiny, this tiny base of our flower right here. This is just a normal satin stitch because this is the only color we're using right here. We're done with that light yellow. Thread your needle with your 3052 mid-tone green. We're going to use this to fill in our leaves. We're going to use the same method that we did for our poppy leaves. But these ones a little simpler because they have straight edges. And we are still gonna go towards this midline on these two leaves. This line right here serves as our midline. And that's where we are stitching to. You're going to angle your satin stitches out a little ways to give this leaf its definition and shape and direction. As you get near the tip of your leaf, the angle of your stitches is going to gradually shift towards that point. Once you reach the point, your stitches are going straight out towards it. This is sometimes where I get little gaps in my stitches. Just remember, go back and fill those in. It's not a big deal. And work your way back down the other side. There's a few things I'm not happy with on this leaf. And I'm going to show you a few troubleshooting tips and pointers. This satin stitch here, you can see, got really lumpy. This is because my two threads that I was stitching with became uneven. And I didn't notice until I got here and you can see where it smoothed out. If this happens to you, one thing you can do is you can turn your hoop over. Find where those stitches are on the back. Sometimes I like to point my needle through so I can see, oh, that's where they are. It's these ones right here that I'm not happy with. You can actually use your needle to kind of pull them tight from the back. And this can sometimes help smooth it out. Not always, but sometimes. I think that looks a lot nicer. The other thing that happened is, as I was stitching my point, I sort of lost the point somewhere in there. That happens to me a lot when I stitch leaves. All I need to do is to create a new point by starting up here and pointing it back down. Let me show you what I mean. Don't worry if you cover up other parts of your pattern. You can adjust those later as needed. That looks much nicer to me. One other little thing is that my stitches became a little uneven. You can

see how they dipped down right here. I'm not happy with that. So all I'm going to do is redo that one stitch that dipped down and just go right over it. Now I'm happy with my leaf and ready to move on to my others. You're going to stitch this leaf and then this one. I have a hoop where I've already stitched those. With our 3052, we're going to keep that color on. We are going to move on to our stems. Our bottom stems, as you can see in our pattern, are thicker. So this stem and then these two coming up are going to use three layers of back stitches. These are going to use two layers and the rest will use one. I'll show you what that looks like. These back stitches can be pretty long. I have one. I'm going to add my second one and a third one to overlap those. These two sections right here and here are just going to have two layers. Now I'm ready to stitch the rest of my stem. But before we do that, I wanna take a look at our pattern. You can see that some of the tendrils coming off are a lot thinner than the other ones. So this one. This one. That one. That one. And then these two little ones here. We're not going to stitch yet. We're actually going to use a single thread to stitch that instead of our double thread. So leave those ones for now. But stitch the rest of your stems and tendrils. As we come near these major curves our stitches are going to get a lot shorter. We're going to stitch this little vine circle here. Almost all the way and leave the tip for that single thread. See how small my stitches get? Before we switch to our single thread, I just want to stitch our little leaves that come along some of our flowers here. This is kind of a combination of satin stitch and backstitch. You're going to follow the shape of the leaves and just fill it in with a few stitches. It's almost like a line with a few satin stitches filling it in. For these leaves, I like to give it one long stitch first. And then fill it in with shorter stitches next to it. And that gives it that point that we're looking for. Now, if you're like me, you might have covered up the green with these two flowers here. And that's fine. This is when you're going to want to look at your pattern and your color guide to see what it is supposed to look like and work from that. Sometimes my water-soluble marker kind of fades as I'm working. And I like to just redraw it a little bit before I stitch. Tie off your green. And pretend like we're saving it for later but flip your hoop over and separate out just a single thread. And thread your needle with that. We're going to go back to those tendrils with our single thread. This'll make them look really delicate and beautiful. Tie off your mid-tone green. And grab yourself your 3013 highlight green. We are just using this highlight green to give our pods here a little leaf. Tie off that highlight green and thread your needle with your 935 dark green for a few finishing touches. Let's add a few shadows to our leaves by just following along some of our stitches and adding dark green over them. I also like to go along that midline of the leaf, like we did on our poppy, with that dark green. Let's add some dark green along the edges of our thicker stems here to give it a little bit more dimensionality. Finally, we're just going to add some shadows underneath these little leaves that we stitched. To make them sort of pop out from the rest of the plant. And we are done stitching our sweet pea.

Labels and backing

- To finish our pieces, we're going to label and back our hoops. Begin by trimming off any extra threads that you have on the back. And then cut your square into a circle, leaving about an inch to two inches excess along the edges. (scissors clicking) Take any color thread. I'm using my ecru here because we're going to use it in a little bit for my labels, but you can do any color you have handy. Thread your needle, but do not knot the end. Leave it looped, flip it over, and secure your thread by pulling your needle through that loop and pulling it tight. Now, we are going to do a running stitch along the entire edge of your circle. A running stitch is where you go in and out in a straight line and pull it through. Try to make sure that you're catching both pieces of fabric as you're doing your

running stitch. If you miss a little bit here and there and you only get a single piece, it's not a big deal, but try to do it for most of your stitches. Stop right before you get to that original stitch, push your needle through, and then you're going to pull it back up on the left side of that original stitch. And pull towards the middle to tighten your fabric. Hold that point with your left hand. Push your needle through twice to make a loop and knot your thread. I like to knot mine at least twice to make sure it's snug. Trim that thread. Now, this is one of my favorite embroidery tricks and tips. To get our blue off, what we are going to do is run this under super hot water, as hot as you can get it, for about three to four seconds and then lay it to dry upright somewhere. And once it's dry, your blue will be gone and your fabric will have shrunk a little bit from that hot water, and any wrinkles or anything that you had in here should come out with that. If they don't, try rinsing it again with hot water and they will come out that second time most times. While you're waiting for your fabric to dry, go ahead and get your patterns. These are your labels, and this is our template for our felt circle. Take your ruler and your X-Acto knife and get pretty close to that text, not on it, just a little bit above it, and take your X-Acto knife, gently dragging it on the paper. If you gently drag it and do it a few times, it helps you get a really clean cut without snagging the paper. (knife scraping) We're going to leave a little bit of space on either side of our word because that is where our stitch is going to happen. About there is perfect. (knife scraping) Repeat this with your other label and then cut out your felt circle template with scissors. Take your labels, lay it on a piece of felt, take a needle and poke a hole on the top and bottom. After you poke your hole, you're going to lift up your label and push your needle all the way through it to make that hole just a little bit bigger. Once your hoop is totally dry, take your label, lay it on, get your ecru thread, and thread and knot your needle. Line up your label on the bottom of your hoop. One tip for doing this is that you're looking to line it up with your hoop more than with your sweet pea. It's kind of hard to figure out where the midline is of your flower. What I like to do is make sure that this distance from here to there and from the label to the hoop on this side are about even. When I'm happy with where it is, I'm going to poke a hole through the top right hole of my label, and that will mark my fabric for me. Bring the needle up through that hole and then through the label, coming from the back to the front. Push it down through the bottom. Don't worry too much if it's a little crooked right now because we won't need to worry about that until we do our final stitch. Repeat on the other side by poking your needle through that top left corner, which will mark your fabric. Now, this last stitch is where we are really securing it. You can see that even with these one, two, three points of contact, my label still has quite a bit of give. So this is when I really wanna line it up and this is where I am looking at the horizontal and vertical lines of my fabric and making sure that my label lines up with those. When I'm happy with where it is, I poke my needle through and secure it. Tie off your thread on the back and trim it. Take your felt, your circle template, and something to write with. You can use your water-soluble marker. I'm going to use a Sharpie so you can see clearly. Outline your circle. Now, since we'll need two of these, I like to fold my felt over and cut while it's folded so I end up with two circles when I'm done. (scissors clicking) Flip your hoop over, lay your circle on to make sure it fits. If it's a little bit bigger, you might wanna trim it. If it's a little small, you might need to redo it. This is a perfect fit. And if you followed the template, yours should be just right too. Get any color thread that you want and thread your needle, leaving a loop at the end again. To secure our thread, you're going to take your needle, push it through the fabric and then up through the felt, pull your needle through that loop to secure it and pull it tight. We are going to be doing a whip stitch around the entire edge of our circle by pushing our needle down through our fabric and up through our felt. Move over about 1/2 an inch and do the same thing, down through the fabric, up through the felt.

Pull to secure. It makes a loop or a whip stitch around and secures them together. Repeat this around the entire circumference. When you are done, when you get back to that original stitch, you're going to push your needle through that original stitch and leave a loop. Knot your thread by pulling your needle through that loop and repeat a second or third time. Find a spot in your felt where you can stick your needle and push it up. This will secure that tail of your thread. Go ahead and trim that off. Repeat this with your poppy and you are done with your project. With just two embroidery stitches, you created a real work of art. I had a lot of fun teaching you how to thread paint. Use these skills to create more embroideries based on the plants growing in your own backyard.