

## Compensation - Easier Than You Think!

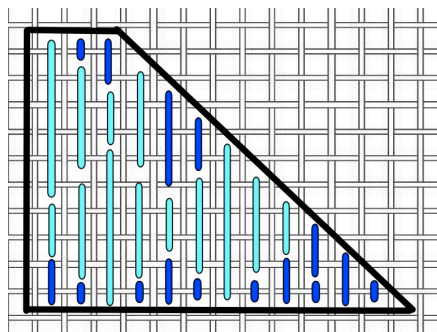
What is compensation? Aside from its legal and medical definitions, in needlepoint it refers to the use of partial stitches to maintain a stitch pattern within a defined space. That space may be part of the design on a painted canvas as well as the background around the design.

Sometimes we can be intimidated by the thought of compensation; it's supposed to be hard and we don't want to do it! I personally have looked at some intricate designs and thought to myself, "I'll just basketweave this." But like anything else, compensation is a skill that can be learned and improved with each attempt. In this series, I will be discussing some tips to use where compensation becomes necessary.

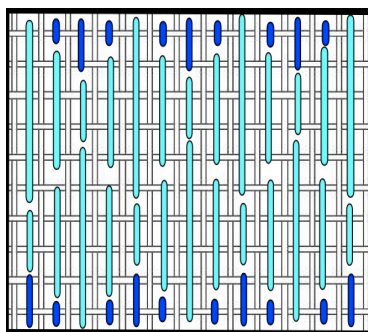
First, let's break down stitch directions. A single stitch on the canvas can go in one of three directions: straight, diagonal (45 degrees), or oblique (any angle other than 45 degrees). A stitch pattern may combine different lengths and/or directions of individual stitches to form an overall repeating pattern.

Next are the dividing lines. These are the outlines of the painted areas that you are either compensating within or around. Once again, these lines can be straight, diagonal or oblique. A circular or oval shape will have all three types of lines, depending on the overall size of the shape.

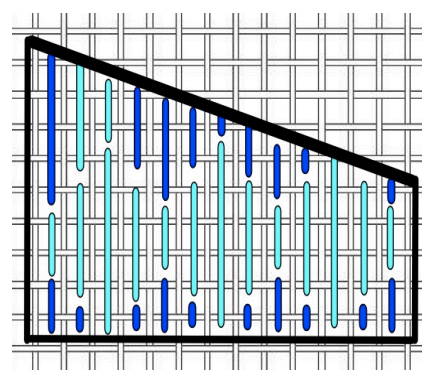
This month we'll cover compensating straight stitch patterns. We'll talk about diagonal and oblique patterns next month, and finish with general compensation tips the following month. We'll start with Pavilion Diamonds. The diagrams below compensation against a straight line, diagonal line, and an oblique line. The compensation stitches are pictured in dark blue.



Diagonal  
Line



Straight  
Line



Oblique  
Line