

Compensation – Part 3

A Few Tips and Tricks

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- Establish your pattern by working across the widest part of the painted area. This will allow you work the stitch pattern above and below until you reach the edges, and then work your compensating stitches.
- You can work the complete stitch pattern as it fits the area, and then wait until the end to work your compensation stitches. However, if you are using an overdyed thread, it's probably better to compensate as you go. It may be helpful to draw your compensating stitches on a diagram before stitching.
- If you are compensating along a straight edge, use a Post-It note to mark the straight edge on your diagram. Or, make a copy of your diagram and draw out the compensation stitches as needed.
- Try to maintain the correct angle for the compensating stitches. Take your needle to the end of the complete stitch as diagrammed and lay your thread along that line; the hole it crosses at the edge of the painted area is the correct ending point for the compensation stitch.
- Use a sharp needle to pierce the canvas threads if necessary to maintain the proper stitch angle. Note that this will not work with some of the specialty textured threads, so make sure your thread weight and type are appropriate for this technique.
- Keep your stitch pattern in proportion to the painted area. Check the pattern repeat and make sure you have enough room to have multiple repeats. Avoid having too many compensation stitches which will visually disrupt the pattern.
- Matching your stitch pattern to the overall shape and direction of the painted area will minimize the amount of compensating necessary. A complex stitch with oblique angles will be easier to work in an area with straight or diagonal edges. Straight or diagonal stitch patterns will be easier in a complex shape with multiple oblique edges.
- Practice, practice, practice! As with anything else, compensation is a skill that you can improve with time.