

# Shell

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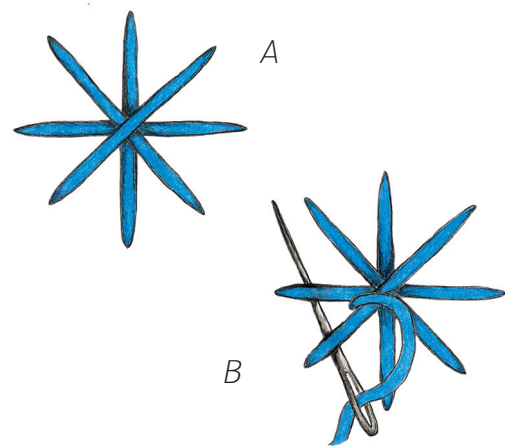
This stitch is sometimes called Wheel or Spider Web but I have always called it Shell as it reminds me of a barnacle, both for its circular, ridged appearance and the fact that it sits highly raised on the fabric. It is simple to work but care needs to be taken to keep an even tension on the yarn as you stitch around the spokes of the circle.

First work an upright cross; then a diagonal cross on top so that each point marks the diameter of a circle as shown in diagram A.

Then bring the needle through to the right side at the centre of the circle but clear of the embroidered stitches. From now on, all of the embroidery takes place clear of the knitted fabric thus: \* take the needle back over and then insert under one spoke, and then forward under the next spoke of the circle as shown in diagram B and gently pull the yarn through to make a stitch, being careful to keep an even tension; then repeat from \* so that the thread is wound around every spoke of the circle.

Ensure that the spokes are not pulled out of position as you work. Keep stitching around the spokes in this manner until they are all covered. The more you stitch around the circle, the more raised the shell will become. For the Sea Anemone design, I stitched all around the spokes four times.

It is worth practising this stitch on a swatch until you are confident that you can keep the tension even. Having said that, if you do mess up a shell on the garment it is easy to remove it because other than the initial crosses, none of the stitches are attached to the knitting. This means that you can carefully snip the embroidery thread on the wrong side and lift off the whole piece.



You can work the shells in a different shade to the knitted garment as I did on the Sea Anemone costume. You can also use different colours of yarn for making each circular “trip” around the spokes of one shell.

# French Knots

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This is one of my favourite embroidery stitches as it is very simple and can be used to great effect either singly or massed to produce varying degrees of texture and colour.

To begin, bring the needle through the knitted yarn to the right side at the point where the knot will sit (A on the diagram). Twist the thread once round the needle as shown, and making sure it stays twisted, insert the needle back into the knitting through the knitted yarn immediately next to point A, thus forming a knot.

