A Simple Fish in Cloth Stitch

A beginners' pattern suitable for everyone.

Materials
7 pairs wound in pairs
D.M.C. perle no.8
2mm bead

Figure 1 (above) Cloth stitch Fish

Figure 2 (right) Cloth stitch Fish, pricking

Wind the bobbins in pairs with a single bead on one pair.
**Bobbins wound as a pair**
Two bobbins wound from different ends of the same thread (figure 3).

*Figure 3 (right) Bobbins wound as a pair*

**Numbering Bobbins and Pairs**
Bobbins and pairs are always numbered from the left, unless instructions are given to count from the right or from the edge, which may be the left or right, according to the situation. Bobbins and pairs are renumbered after every movement.

**Basic Movements**
Almost all bobbin lacemaking is a mixture of twists and crosses.

**Twist**
Using a pair of bobbins pass the right hand bobbin over the left hand bobbin (figure 4). When two pairs of bobbins are being worked the instruction to 'twist' applies to both bobbins. If only one is to be twisted or if the bobbins are to be twisted a different number of times this will be stated.

*Figure 4*

**Cross**
Using two pairs of bobbins, pass the second bobbin from the left over the bobbin on its right, i.e. number 2 over number 3 (figure 5).

*Figure 5*

**Cloth Stitch**
Cloth stitch is the stitch that produces the woven areas in lace. The stitch is made using two pairs of bobbins that work cross, twist, cross, i.e. using four bobbins numbered 1-4

Cross - pass 2 over 3 (figure 6) (renumber)

Twist - pass 2 over 1 and 4 over 3 (bobbins 2 & 4 move together) (figure 7) (renumber)

Cross - pass 2 over 3 (figure 8)

*Figure 6 (far left) Cross*

*Figure 7 (centre) Cross & twist*

*Figure 8 (left) Cross, twist, cross, a cloth stitch,*
Wind seven pairs of bobbins in pairs (figure 3) with a single bead on one pair, the bead being on the thread between the bobbins.

Set in with the pair with the bead on pin A and the remaining pairs each on a separate support pin behind pins A and B so that the pairs lie side-by-side between the pins. With pair A as workers cloth stitch across the other pairs, set up a pin at B and twist the workers twice. Return across the row setting up a pin at the end of the row and twist the workers twice. Thread a pin through the loops on the support pins and lay it flat on the pricking immediately behind the pins of the first torchon row. Let down the new pairs until they lie snugly on this pin. This horizontal support pin prevents the passive clothwork pairs from dragging the first row of cloth stitches out of place.

Repeat these rows of cloth stitches until the row immediately before C. After making the first two stitches of the following row slide the bead up the worker thread until it touches the second of these stitches and then continue across the row. These stitches will hold the bead in place.

Continue making rows of cloth stitch until pin D has been set up. Then let down the bobbins and make a bunch and tie to secure them together.

**Bunch and tie**
Grouping threads and securing them together. Cross two single bobbins or pairs beneath the group of threads (figure 10), bring them over the threads until they meet and tie them with a reef knot and a half (figure 10).

**reef knot and a half**
A reef knot followed by the first half of a reef knot (figure 11).

Pairs that weave back and forth and are pinned at the ends of the rows are called the working pair, or workers. The pairs that they work through are called passives or passive pairs (figure 9).
Summary
Cloth stitch is always worked with two pairs of bobbins. At the end of each stitch the pairs are renumbered then one pair is discarded and the next comes into play. One pair of bobbins, called the workers, travels across and back and make the rows; the others pairs remain in their places and travel down through the rows, the passives.

Fish in Cloth stitch with a Twisted Vein

Materials
6 pairs wound in pairs
D.M.C. perle no.8
2mm bead

Figure 12 Threads wrapped before knotting

Figure 13 Fish in cloth stitch with a twisted vein
Setting in
Set in as for the cloth stitch fish but with only six pairs of bobbins and work until the bead eye has been moved into place and the row to pin D has been completed. Then continue working rows with the workers twisted between the centre two pairs of passives.

Making a vein by twisting the workers
The following rows have a twist on the workers between the second and third pairs of passives (figure 15), viz:

When working from right to left work three stitches, twist the workers, work two stitches, pin.

When working from left to right work two stitches, twist the workers, work three stitches, pin.

When pin E is set up revert to rows of cloth stitch without the twist for the vein. Finish with a bunch and tie as for the cloth stitch fish.

The twist takes up the space required for a pair working a cloth stitch therefore one less pair is required.
A Fish in Half Stitch

Materials
6 pairs wound in pairs
D.M.C. perle no.8
2mm bead

Figure 16 (above) Fish in half stitch

Figure 17 (right) Fish in half stitch, pricking
**Setting in**

Set in as for the cloth stitch fish but with only six pairs of bobbins and work until the bead eye has been moved into place and the row to pin D has been completed then continue with rows of half stitch.

**Half stitch**

Half stitch is made using any two pairs of bobbins that work cross, twist, i.e. using four bobbins numbered 1-4
- pass 2 over 3 (figure 18)
- pass 2 over 1 and 4 over 3 (bobbins 2 & 4 move together) (figure 19)

Work rows as for cloth stitch but using half stitches (figures 18 & 19). This time only one thread of the original pair travels across the row, the other bobbin of the pair changes as each stitch is made. The bobbin travelling across and its temporary partner at any particular time are known as the workers. Continue making rows of half stitches but return to cloth stitches across the very last row. Make a bunch and tie and finish as for the cloth stitch fish. It is not necessary to make the twist at the end of the row since half stitches finish with a twist.

It is easy to undo mistakes in cloth stitch, not as easy in half stitch. If you need to rectify a mistake undo all the twists along the current row, remove pin at the end of the previous row and undo the single worker across the row, leaving the twists on the other threads. Repeat undoing the twists, the pin and the single thread, finishing with undoing the single thread until you have removed the mistake. All the pairs should be left one twist with the exception of the workers that may have two. Then resume making. You usually need to remove one more row than expected.

**NOTE:** Be very careful when removing pins and handling this fish. Half stitch edges pull out of shape very easily and is better with a cloth and twist edge as for the following fish.
A Fish in Half Stitch with a Cloth and Twist Edge

Materials
6 pairs wound in pairs
D.M.C. perle no.8
2mm bead

Figure 21 (above) Fish in half stitch with a cloth and twist edge

Figure 22 (right) Fish in half stitch with a cloth and twist edge, pricking
Setting in
Set in as for the cloth stitch fish but with only six pairs of bobbins and work until the bead eye has been moved into place and the row to pin D has been completed then work in half stitch with a cloth and twist edge.

The half stitch edge is very weak and is better made with a cloth and twist edge to prevent it from being distorted.

Half stitch rows with cloth and twist edge
For each row work cloth stitch, twist (both pairs) cloth stitch, twist (both pairs) with the first pair of passives. Then continue in half stitch through the three central pairs of passives and work cloth stitch, twist (both pairs) cloth stitch, twist (both pairs) with the last pair of passives, pin. Remember to add another twist on the pair that goes round the pin so that it has two twists before returning (figure 23).

Figure 23 (right) Half stitch rows with cloth and twist edge

When pin E has been set up revert to rows of cloth stitch without the cloth and twist edge and finish as for the cloth stitch fish.

Continuing Lacemaking

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