

You will need:

Scissors

Thread

Needle

A rectangle of scrap fabric, approx A5

Pencil, or some implement that can make a mark on your fabric

Measuring device (optional, depends how precise you want to be)

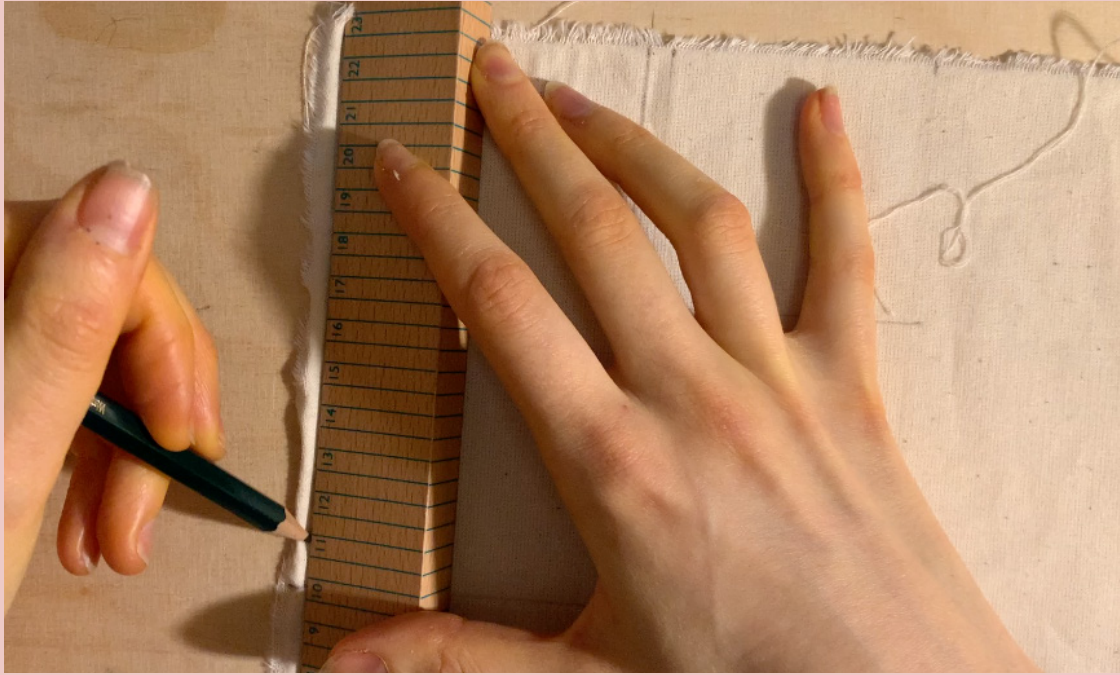
We are making is a little textual amulet with its own pouch. Ideally it will be a size that you can easily carry with you in a pocket.

The first thing we will need to do is to mark out then cut out the fabric.

You can do this as a rectangle, or a square, or a circle, or a triangle if you want: but if you do either of these latter shapes, make sure that the opening of the bag is the widest point of the shape, so that you can get the amulet in and out.

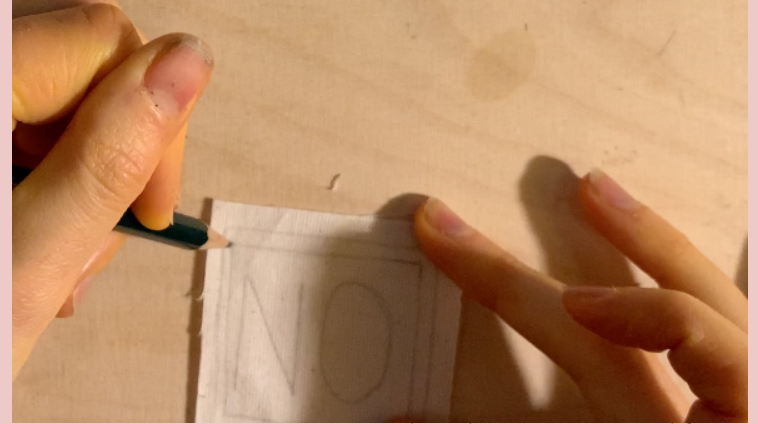
To make the bag, you need slightly more than double the amount of fabric as you will need your amulet. So don't make your amulet with more than a third of the total fabric you have.

Let's say you are making a rectangle. If your amulet is a square which is 6 x 6 cm, then you need to make a bag for it which is 6.5 cm long by 8cm wide. In order to do this, you need a strip of fabric which is 13cm long by 8cm wide, so that when you fold it in half it turns into 6.5cm. The reason why it is 8cm wide is so that you have 0.5cm margin either side for the seams, plus a little bit more give on each side, for the amulet to be able to go in and out of the bag easily.



Once you have figured out the shape and size of your amulet and pouch, mark out your fabric using your ruler and pencil. If your fabric does not have a straight edge against which to measure, you can use the corner of a sheet of paper as your guide. Mark out the lines you are going to cut, and also on your bag, parallel to the longer sides, mark a line 0.5cm in from the edge, where you will sew your seam.

On the bit of fabric which is your amulet, draw the word 'NO'. You can do this any way you want, in your own handwriting, in capital letters, I think it seems kind of potent if it's in your own handwriting do it however you want it to appear. It's best if you can do something which is a single line which you follow without removing your pencil from the fabric or having to go back on yourself. This is because the type of stitch you will be using requires you to go back on yourself, so this makes it easier.



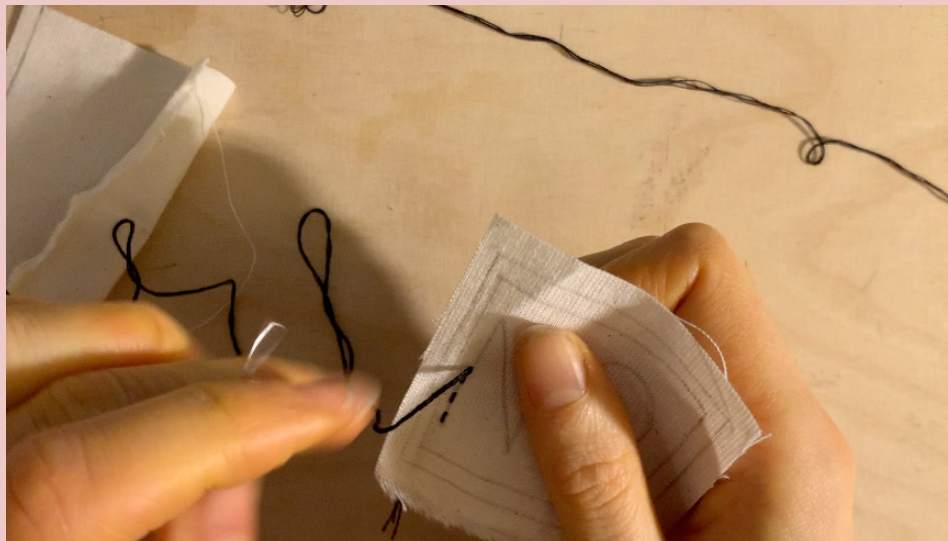
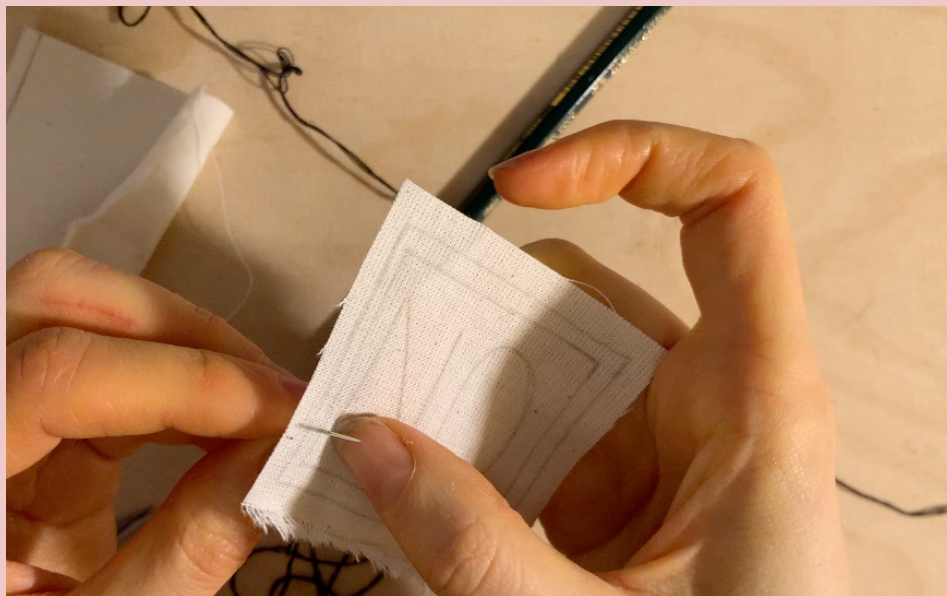
You can also decorate around the No in any way you want, or leave it plain.

So, now that you have everywhere that you are going to sew marked out, we are going to prepare the thread. If you look at embroidery floss closely, it has six strands of thread in it. Ordinarily, you don't want to sew using all six threads. The fewer threads you use, the finer and more precise the embroidery will be, but maybe that's not your style. Also, as we are just embroidering a line, the other consideration is, how thick do you want your line? If you have a fabric which has a very vibrant or dark pattern on it, maybe you want to go for a thicker line so it stands out. So, at this point, we are going to divide our thread, but it is up to you how many strands you use. I usually use three, because this is easy, some people prefer two. It's probably good to go with two or three because these are multiples that go easily into six, whereas if you choose five then you've got one strand left over all the time.

To split your thread, cut off a length. You never need to cut a length which is longer than your arm, because you can't pull thread longer than that, and the longer the thread the more likely it is to tangle. Then you want to split your thread. Pull apart the number of strands you are using, two or three, and start to pull down the thread. As you start pulling it away, the main strand will start to twist and bunch on itself, so as you are easing the strands apart, keep untwisting the main strand. Go slowly, it is less likely to tangle.

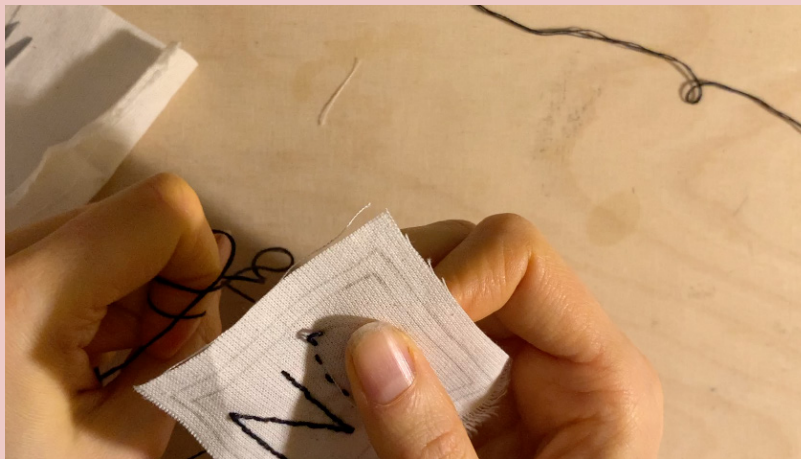
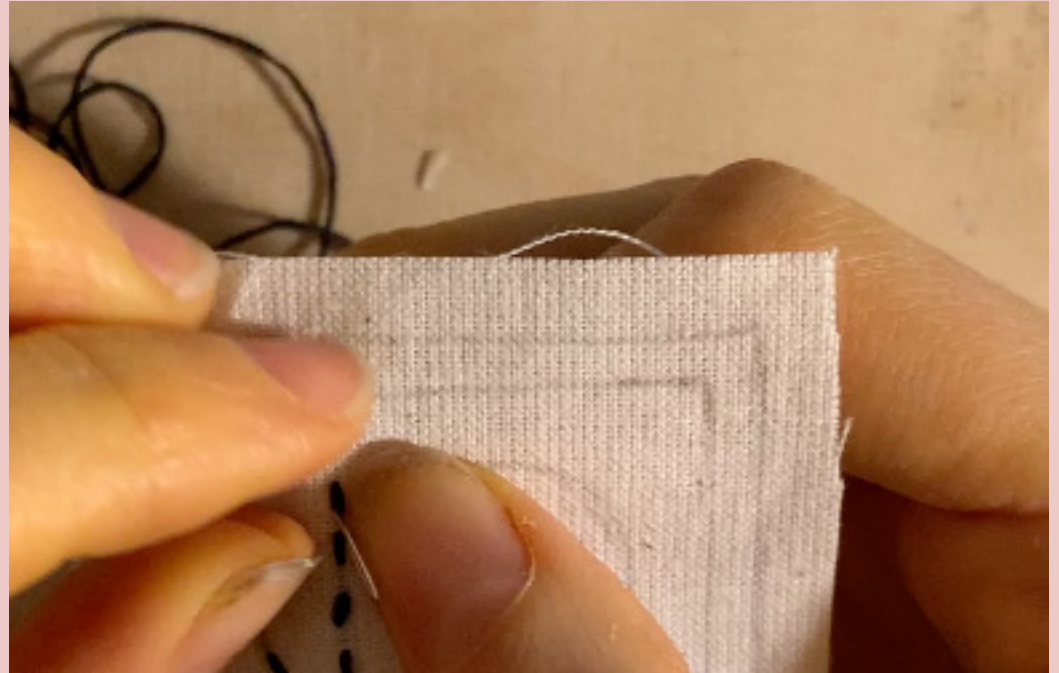
Now the stitch we are doing is called the Holbein stitch. The reason that we are doing this stitch is because it gives a continuous line which is the same on the front and the back. It is a very simple stitch, that you can do whether or not you have any experience in embroidery.

The first thing that we do is a running stitch along your line. So to start, thread your needle, and tie a knot in the thread at the opposite end. Then in the furthest end of your No, so the lowest point of the N, put the needle in the bottom and pull through. Then go back down into the fabric, to make a stitch. Now the length of your stitches is also entirely up to you. The smaller the stitches, the smoother your line, but also the longer it is going to take. So after you've made your first stitch and your needle is underneath your fabric, leaving a space of equal length to your stitch, come back up through the fabric, and we are going to repeat all the way along the fabric.



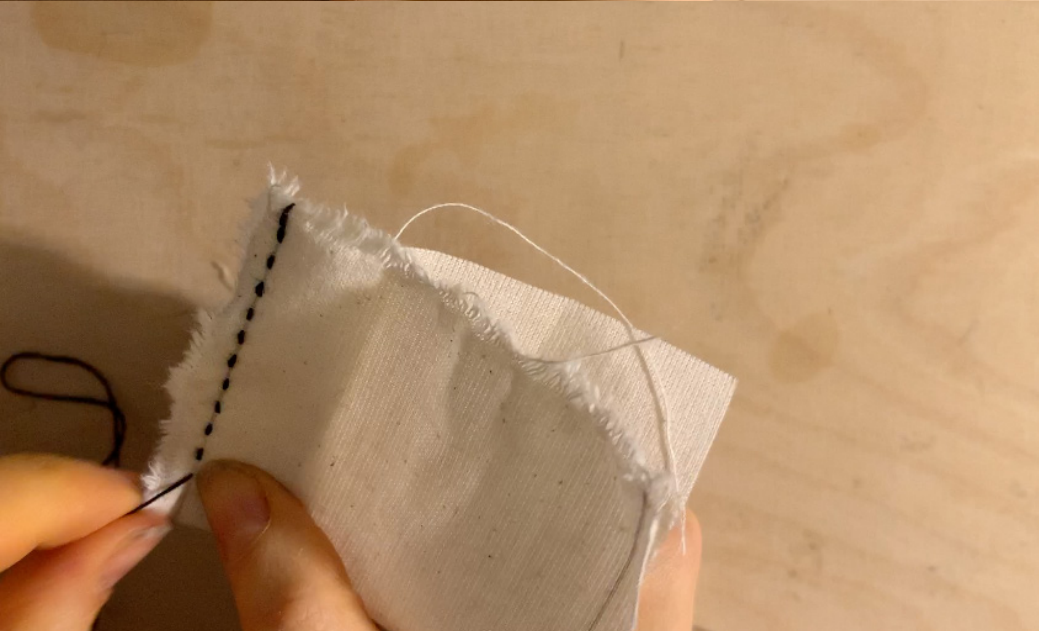


Then when you have reached the end of the line, you simply turn back and do exactly the same stitch but filling in the spaces. When you have reached the end of the N, cut the thread, leaving enough to tie a knot in the thread. Tie a knot to make sure it doesn't fray, then start on the 'O'.



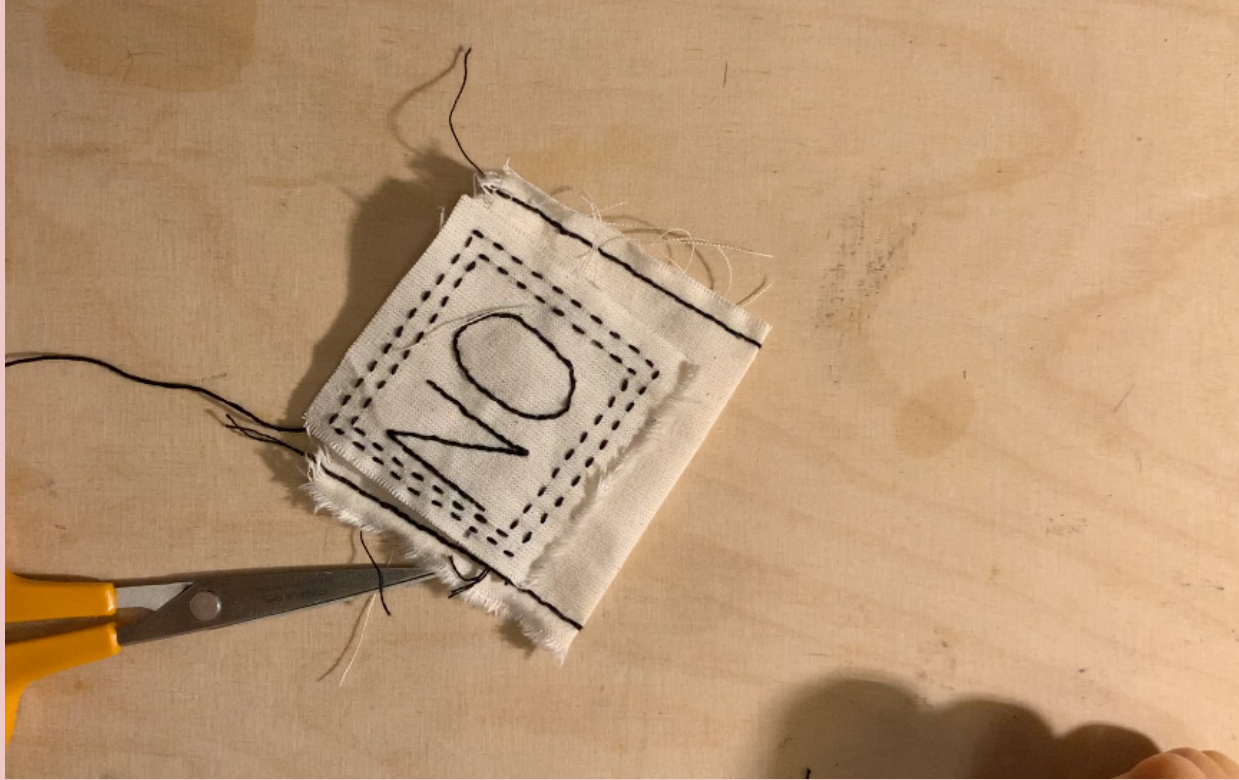


This is the stitch that we are going to use for all of the seams, so then when you are done sewing your NO, then it is time to do the bag. Fold it in half lengthways, with the marked seams on the outside so you can see where you are going to sew. Then use the same stitch on the bag for sewing up the two edges of the pouch.



Then if you want, you can turn this inside out, or you can leave it open if you like open seams (I prefer open seams, I'm messy).





This is a very simple design, so in your own time, if you haven't already, feel free to add to and embellish it if you so want, or not if you prefer it minimal. Also, do use this pouch to put in other affirmations and textual amulets and other kinds of amulets and things that are important to carry with you.