Transfer a Small Embroidery Design to Linen

Trace an original twig onto pale linen while keeping placement and ink under control

Why the transfer matters

Embroidery starts before the first stitch: the guide line must be visible enough to follow but light enough to remove or conceal. This project transfers an original little branching twig to a square of pale, medium-weight linen. The design is deliberately simple so you can practise smooth lines, keep the cloth grain aligned and decide which marks should not go onto the fabric.

What you receive

PATTERN 1 contains a 100 x 100 mm guide field surrounding an original compact twig and two precise 50 mm scale bars. PATTERN 2 supplies a placement key, a small line-weight practice area and two more scale bars. The large square, centre crosses, ruler bars, captions and letters are for aligning the sheet only; they are never part of the stitched drawing.

Select suitable cloth and marker

Use one 180 x 180 mm square of light linen or stable linen-cotton with a visible, fairly even weave. A dark or opaque fabric may not transmit sufficient light for tracing; do not press harder to force a mark. Choose a fine removable textile marker appropriate to this cloth. Scrap linen for testing, low-tack tape, a ruler, the printed design and a clean light pad or safely accessible window are the main tools.

Care and boundaries

Some water-removable inks require a cool-water rinse before heat is applied, while air-fading inks can disappear before stitching. Follow the particular marker manufacturer's directions and test both application and complete removal on an offcut. Do not trace on an elevated or unstable window surface. This digital instruction is not evidence of a physical printing, ink-removal, wash or stitching test by the publisher.

If the line wanders

Recheck whether the cloth shifted or was stretched; an uneven weave can also deflect the pen tip. On the next attempt, trace a shorter section, pause and check alignment before following the next leaf.

Measure and plan

Choose a source of light

A steady light pad or a secure, accessible daylight window can make lines visible through pale linen. Fix the paper to the light source first, then place the cloth over it. Keep fabric away from hot lamps and exposed wiring. If you cannot see the motif clearly, stop and use a different transfer method appropriate to the fabric rather than drawing from memory.

Understand the original dimensions

The printed guide field is exactly 100 mm wide and high; the twig occupies a smaller area within that field. The 180 mm cloth square leaves nominal 40 mm margins outside EACH edge of the centred 100 mm paper field, because (180 - 100) / 2 = 40. This is a field-to-cloth margin, not a measured margin to the twig itself. Those margins are for positioning and later hoop handling; the paper field is not a fabric cutting outline. Always verify the printed calibration bars with a real ruler.

Align cloth grain and the image

The main twig has a vertical axis. Line up that axis with a straight visible linen warp thread or a ruler line; do not stretch the square on the bias to make the marks coincide. Choose the design centre by measuring the same distance from the fabric's opposite edges, rather than aligning only with an irregular selvedge.

Test the removable line first

Draw a fine line and a small dot on an offcut from the same fabric. Follow the marker's removal instructions; confirm the marks disappear to your satisfaction after the cloth dries. If the test leaves colour or damages the fibre, try a different tool. Never promise complete removal based on the word erasable alone.

Decide whether to use a hoop

For light tracing, keep the linen flat against the paper rather than stretching it across a hoop. After transfer, a 10–12 cm embroidery hoop can support the 180 mm square for later stitching. Do not trap the fabric in a hoop while it is folded over the edge of a light pad. Loosen a hoop between sessions if it creases the linen.

A backup when linen is opaque

If the light does not pass through sufficiently, consider a washable fabric-transfer paper or a temporary stabilizer compatible with the cloth. Verify removal and colourfastness using an offcut before choosing either. This edition teaches the light-tracing route, so the alternative is a decision point, not a claim that every stabilizer works on linen.

If the line is too faint

Do not repeatedly saturate the linen with marker ink. Adjust the light, choose a thinner outline to transfer or switch to an offcut-tested transfer method. Repeated heavy marking can leave a shadow under fine stitches.

Rights and evidence

All twig artwork, dimensional placement guides, worksheets and English text were newly designed for this issue. No third-party embroidery motif was copied. Digital checks cannot establish whether a real pen will wash out, a printed bar measures correctly or a maker can complete a stitch.

Step-by-step / 1 to 7

1. Read the two pattern sheets

Review PATTERN 1 for the twig and PATTERN 2 for the light-placement diagram. Locate the two 50 mm scale bars on each page. Do not trace instructions, registration letters, boxes or rulers onto the fabric.

2. Print at actual size

Use the A4 or US Letter PDF at Actual Size / 100%, not Fit to Page. Measure every printed 50 mm bar with a physical ruler. If any bar is not 50 mm, correct the viewer or printer scaling before using the drawing.

3. Cut and prepare linen

If the cloth care label permits, prewash, dry and press a linen square before marking. Cut one 180 x 180 mm square along the straight grain, or use a larger plain cloth with its 180 mm working square marked by ruler. Never iron over temporary ink until the marker instructions allow it.

4. Check the marker on an offcut

Draw a short curved sample and a small dot on matching scrap linen. Remove the test lines by the product directions and check the cloth after drying. Use the tool only if the result is acceptable; allow any damp test piece to dry fully.

5. Secure the printed twig

Tape PATTERN 1 to a stable, cool light surface with the upright twig clearly visible. Tape along paper edges so tape does not conceal the motif. Work at a convenient height; never lean out of a window or place glass near an unsupported edge.

6. Position the linen square

Lay the prepared linen flat over the printed twig. Match the centre of the 100 mm guide with the centre of the cloth; align the vertical axis with the cloth grain. Gently smooth wrinkles without pulling the weave out of square.

7. Anchor corners without stretching

Hold the linen edges with low-tack tape outside the intended transfer area. Recheck the twig stem and leaves through the cloth before tracing. If lines are difficult to see, increase safe backlighting or choose a different transfer technique.

Step-by-step / 8 to 14

8. Trace the main stem lightly

Use one thin pass to follow the stem from its lower point toward the upper branch. Keep the marker almost perpendicular to the cloth, letting the tip glide instead of snagging linen threads. Avoid thick outlines that future stitches may fail to cover.

9. Trace each leaf outline

Continue around the left and right leaf shapes in short, controlled strokes. Lift the marker at tight tips rather than dragging a large curve through the point. Trace only the intended twig linework, not the paper registration cross.

10. Check missed joins before lifting

Carefully lift one loose edge of fabric to inspect the twig. If a line is broken, return the cloth to the same alignment and complete that small portion. Do not redraw the whole stem darker merely to find one missing spot.

11. Release paper and fabric

Remove the low-tack tape and lift the linen away without scraping the marked surface. Place the paper template in a clean envelope for future reference. Do not press a hot iron over any markings unless your exact product permits it.

12. Recheck placement with a ruler

Confirm that the traced design remains centred in the selected working area and is not skewed against the linen grain. The paper guide is 100 x 100 mm, but no border should be visible on the cloth. Record any transfer shift rather than stretching the linen to hide it.

13. Prepare for optional stitching

Only after the tracing is complete, set the cloth gently in a suitable hoop if you intend to embroider. The transferred twig may be worked in backstitch or stem stitch; this guide does not require stitching. Keep needle and loose floss secured away from children and pets.

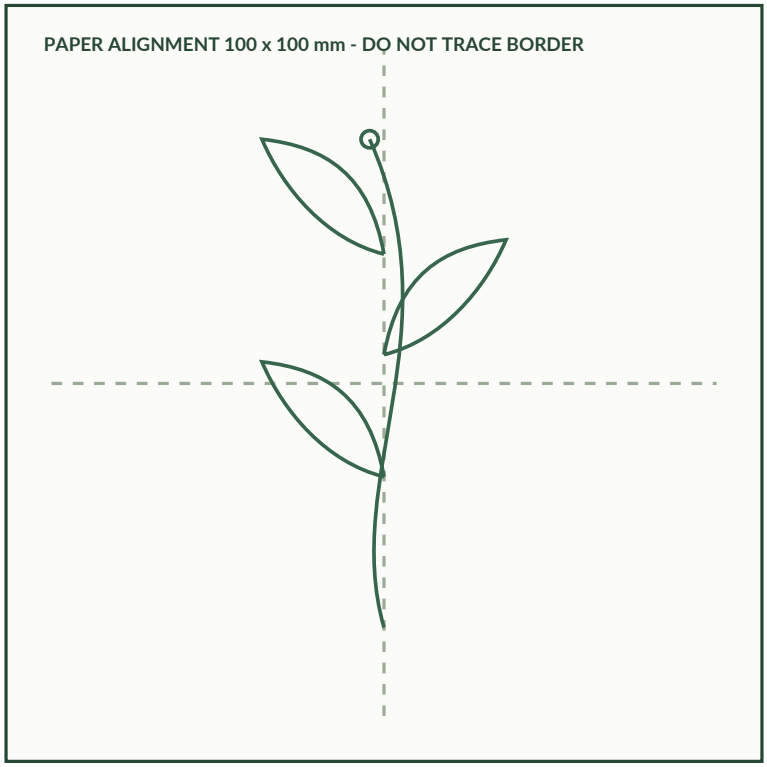
14. Record the outcome and clean up

Use RECORD 1 for marker, lighting and scale readings, then RECORD 2 to note faint, misplaced or unremovable marks. Store all sharp tools and follow the marker care instructions. Never say a cloth is washable or completely mark-free unless you have verified your own material.

STP-MAKE-F061 PATTERN 1 OF 2

Original linen tracing / 100 x 100 mm field and transfer-alignment practice.

REFERENCE: check all 50 mm bars with a physical ruler before tracing or cutting.



TRACE only fine twig lines. Never transfer dashed registration lines.

Cloth size: 180 x 180 mm. Nominal field margin: (180 - 100)/2 = 40 mm.

50 mm scale check (measure after printing)

50 mm scale check (measure after printing)

Actual Size (100%). No Fit to Page. Paper-only labels are not embroidery marks.

STP-MAKE-F061 PATTERN 2 OF 2

Original linen tracing / 100 x 100 mm field and transfer-alignment practice.

REFERENCE: check all 50 mm bars with a physical ruler before tracing or cutting.

MARKING SEQUENCE / enlarged teaching view (NOT TO TRANSFER SCALE)

1. PRINT



Print 100% & ruler-check

2. ALIGN



Fix paper + flat linen

3. TRACE



Fine line; lift to inspect

Test marker AND complete removal on an offcut. Never iron marks before product permits.

50 mm scale check (measure after printing)

50 mm scale check (measure after printing)

Actual Size (100%). No Fit to Page. Paper-only labels are not embroidery marks.

MAKE / MEASURE / ADJUST

Fabric and alignment

Linen: _____. 180 x 180 mm square. 100 x 100 mm paper reference field. Warp direction: _____.

Print checks

Pattern 1 50 mm bars A ____ B ____; Pattern 2 A ____ B ____. All four must measure 50 mm.

Pen compatibility

Marker product: _____. Offcut line removed fully? Yes / No. Product instructions followed? Yes / No.

Light and placement

Light pad / safe window. Any sliding, skew or missed leaf section? _____.

What changed

Next time I will adjust: alignment / pen / amount of light / alternative transfer method.

MAKE / MEASURE / ADJUST

Record later stitching

This is a transfer guide. Stitching a twig is an optional later project, not part of the publisher's tested deliverable.

Ink check

Marking still faintly visible? _____. Method permitted by marker label: _____.

Remove safely

Check the marker instructions before water, heat, detergent or pressing. Never promise all inks erase.

Materials record

Texture, weave and age of cloth: _____. Was the final cloth entirely dry? _____.

Publisher boundary

No physical ink, transfer, printer or embroidery test was performed. Printable guides are original digital assets.