

Crow, Spiderweb & Gothic Rose Wreath

A dark crow perched on a twisted branch is framed by burgundy, forest-green and cream roses, deep leafy vines, berry sprays, warm ochre twigs and layered spiderwebs with a small central spider.

Skill: Intermediate

Hoop: 8-9 in / 20-23 cm

DMC palette: 14 colors

Fabric: natural ivory linen/cotton

ARTWORK REFERENCE



DESIGN ARCHITECTURE

Focal point: The crow carries the darkest value mass. Use directional feather fills to preserve the long wing and tail structure.
Secondary motifs: Large wine and green roses form the visual anchors; cream roses, vines, leaves, berries, ochre stems and webs complete the wreath.
Light/dark plan: Near-black plumage, deep burgundy roses and green-black leaves carry shadows. Cream roses and pale taupe webs provide the brightest contrast.
Approach: Stitch structural linework first, then crow and roses, followed by foliage and branch; reserve web highlights and tiny knots for the final pass.

Motif	Stitch	Strands	Direction / technique
Crow plumage	Long-and-short + split	1-2	Feather groups flow head-to-tail; short split stitch defines feather edges.
Beak, feet, eye	Satin + backstitch	1	Smooth beak fill; fine contour on toes; tiny light catch in eye.
Burgundy/green roses	Padded satin + split	2	Work petals from outer rim inward, following each curved petal.
Cream roses	Satin / whipped backstitch	1-2	Keep pale petals clean; use gentle spiral direction.
Leaves, vines, branch	Fishbone + stem + split	1-2	Leaves base-to-tip; vines follow curves; branch uses irregular wood-grain lines.
Webs, berries, spider	Backstitch + knots	1	Web spokes first, then arcs; French knots for berries; tiny split/backstitch spider.

CORRECTED DMC PALETTE

Swatch	DMC	Color name	Usage
	310	Black	Deepest crow feathers, eye surround and strongest contour accents.
	3799	Pewter Gray Very Dark	Crow wing/tail mid-dark feathers and beak shadow transitions.
	413	Pewter Gray Dark	Upper crow highlights, feather separation and cool beak planes.
	317	Pewter Gray	Small feather glints and cool gray accents on beak/legs.
	3865	Winter White	Cream roses, web glints and tiny highlight points.
	3033	Mocha Brown Very Light	Spiderweb structure, pale neutral stems and soft web shadows.
	154	Grape Very Dark	Deep wine roses, buds and darkest berry clusters.
	814	Garnet Dark	Burgundy petal midtones and berry highlights.
	500	Blue Green Very Dark	Deep green roses, darkest leaves and vine shadows.
	501	Blue Green Dark	Main green rose petals, leafy vines and foliage midtones.
	502	Blue Green	Leaf highlights and lighter green petal transitions.
	3011	Khaki Green Dark	Muted olive leaves, sepals and botanical shadow notes.
	420	Hazelnut Brown Dark	Twisted perch branch, warm twigs and brown vein accents.
	3829	Old Gold Very Dark	Ochre stems, seed heads, branch warmth and small gold-brown accents.

IMAGE-SPECIFIC STITCHING SEQUENCE

- Trace the framework** - Transfer the wreath arcs, branch, rose centers and web spokes. Keep the pale web lines light so they remain secondary.
- Build the crow** - Outline with split stitch, then layer charcoal and gray long-and-short stitches in the natural direction of the feathers.
- Stitch the large roses** - Work burgundy and green flowers petal-by-petal, keeping curved satin direction consistent and adding the darkest tones deep in folds.
- Add foliage and branch** - Use fishbone leaves, stem-stitched vines and irregular split/straight stitches on the twisted perch and ochre twigs.
- Complete web and small motifs** - Backstitch the web arcs, add the tiny spider, cream roses, buds, berries and seed heads.
- Finish highlights** - Add feather glints, pale rose edges, web highlights and final knots. Clean the reverse and secure all traveling threads.

MASTER TENSION & COLOR-MATCH GUIDELINES

- Use 1 strand on webs, spider legs, fine crow outlines and tiny berry stems; use 2 strands for most fills.
- Keep long-and-short feather fills loose enough to lie flat; do not pull dense plumage until the linen puckers.
- Shape rose petals with curved stitch direction and slightly shorter stitches near tight petal turns.
- Work dark crow/rose areas before cream highlights where practical, then wash hands or change needle before pale thread.
- Keep web arcs evenly tensioned and straight between anchor points; avoid sagging or over-tightening.
- Verify burgundy, green-black and cream shades against a physical DMC card before final stitching.

MOTIF THREAD-AND-DIRECTION MAP

Motif	Thread color	Stitch	Strands	Direction	Special note
Crow body / wing / tail	310, 3799, 413, 317	Long-and-short + split	1-2	Head-to-tail feather flow	Overlap small feather groups; preserve crisp wing and tail separations.
Beak / feet / eye	3799, 413, 317, 3865	Satin + backstitch	1	Along form / toe contours	Use one tiny pale eye catch only; keep toes fine.
Burgundy roses & buds	154, 814	Padded satin / split	2	Curved around petal centers	Darkest grape sits in petal folds; garnet carries exposed planes.
Green roses	500, 501, 502	Padded satin / split	2	Curved petal rings	Place 500 in deep center folds and 502 on outer petal ridges.
Cream roses	3865, 3033	Satin / whipped backstitch	1-2	Gentle spiral	Use 3033 sparingly as shadow so flowers remain luminous.
Leaves & vines	500, 501, 502, 3011	Fishbone / stem	1-2	Base-to-tip / along vine	Keep leaf midribs clean; alternate greens to separate overlaps.
Branch & ochre twigs	420, 3829, 3011	Split / straight / stem	1-2	Follow wood grain	Irregular stitch lengths make the branch look twisted rather than flat.
Webs, spider, berries	3033, 3865, 154, 814, 310	Backstitch + French knots	1	Spokes then arcs	Use tiny knots and short web bars; keep spider compact and centered.

FINAL CHECK

- ✓ Crow feather groups read clearly and do not merge into a flat black shape.
- ✓ Rose petal edges stay clean, with burgundy, green and cream families visually separated.
- ✓ Web spokes and arcs remain delicate, even and unpuckered.
- ✓ Leaves maintain consistent base-to-tip direction and clean midribs.
- ✓ Branch, vines and floral wreath meet without bulky thread buildup.
- ✓ No visible traveling threads cross the open linen behind the web.
- ✓ Highlight placement is balanced across crow, cream roses and web droplets.
- ✓ Strand counts are consistent and all thread ends are secured.

Filling vs. linework: Fill crow plumage, roses and selected leaves. Keep spiderwebs, fine vines, berry stems and tiny spider details primarily as linework.

Edge control: Split-stitch flower and crow boundaries before dense fills when a clean contour is critical.

Realistic density: Avoid over-packing the dark crow and green roses; a little fabric relief between stitch groups keeps the piece hand-embroidered rather than machine-dense.