

Haunted Crystal Ball & Pumpkin Moon Wreath

A central crystal-ball scene contains a dark turreted castle, bare branching trees, a winding path and warm lit windows. Four rust-orange pumpkins, sage-gray leafy vines, orange buds, black and gray bats, crescents, stars and scattered dots form a balanced Halloween wreath around it.

Skill level: Intermediate

Suggested hoop: 8-9 in / 20-23 cm

DMC palette: 15 colors

Fabric: white or warm ivory linen/cotton

DESIGN ARCHITECTURE



Main focal point: The round crystal ball is the visual center. Its dark castle, spindly trees and winding road create the strongest value contrast.

Secondary motifs: Four pumpkins sit at the top, left, right and bottom of the wreath. Sage foliage, orange buds, bats, crescents and starbursts create the circular rhythm.

Value structure: Near-black castle, trees and bats are the darkest areas. Pale globe highlights and warm gold base details are the brightest, with pumpkins providing the dominant warm color.

Embroidery approach: Establish the crystal-ball outline and castle geometry first, then work pumpkins and foliage. Add bats, stars, moons and tiny knots last so the open fabric remains clean.

CORE STITCH DIRECTORY

Motif	Stitch	Strands	Direction / Technique
Crystal-ball rim	Split stitch + whipped backstitch	1-2	Follow the circular contour; keep the rim smooth and even with no flat spots.
Castle & turrets	Backstitch + satin / brick	1-2	Build vertical walls and roof triangles cleanly; fill dark masses in short controlled rows.
Bare trees & path	Stem / split + long-and-short	1	Branch outward from trunks; curve path stitches with perspective toward the castle.
Gold globe base	Satin + long-and-short	2	Work horizontally across tiers; shade lower edges darker to suggest molded depth.
Pumpkins	Long-and-short + split outline	2	Stitch vertically along each rib; place darker copper in grooves and lighter rust on raised lobes.
Leaves & wreath vines	Fishbone + stem stitch	1-2	Leaves base-to-tip; stems flow continuously around the circular wreath.
Bats, moons & stars	Satin / backstitch / straight stitch	1-2	Fill bats compactly; curve moon stitches; radiate stars from their centers.
Orange buds & dots	French / colonial knots	1-2	Use compact knots and tiny satin buds; vary size subtly but keep spacing deliberate.

IMAGE-SPECIFIC STITCHING SEQUENCE

- Map the crystal ball:** Split-stitch the circular rim and base outline, then mark the main castle silhouette, tree trunks and winding path inside the globe.
- Build the haunted scene:** Fill castle walls and turrets in charcoal values, add black-brown trees, then stitch the lighter road and tiny gold window lights.
- Work the golden stand:** Fill the pedestal from top to bottom with old-gold shades, using darker thread under each ridge and lighter thread across raised bands.
- Stitch the pumpkin anchors:** Complete the four rust-orange pumpkins, shaping each lobe with vertical long-and-short stitches and crisp dark grooves.
- Complete the wreath:** Stem-stitch the gray-green vines, then add fishbone leaves and orange buds around the entire circle while keeping the wreath airy.
- Finish bats, moons and stars:** Add the black/gray bats, crescent moons, orange and gold starbursts, dots and final highlights; clean the reverse and secure all ends.

MASTER TENSION & COLOR-MATCH GUIDELINES

- Keep the crystal-ball circle under even tension; small distortions are especially visible in a geometric round rim.
- Use short, directional fill stitches in the castle and pumpkins rather than forcing long satin spans over large areas.
- Work the darkest castle, tree and bat values before pale globe highlights where practical to reduce dark-fiber contamination.
- Keep pumpkin rib direction vertical and consistent; use darker groove lines rather than thicker strands for depth.
- Test critical charcoal, copper, sage-gray and old-gold shades against a physical DMC card before final stitching.

CORRECTED DMC PALETTE

Swatch	DMC	Color name	Usage
	310	Black	Black bats, pumpkin stems, darkest star marks and the deepest castle/tree accents.
	3799	Pewter Gray Very Dark	Castle silhouette, bare trees, deep globe shadows and darkest gray bats.
	413	Pewter Gray Dark	Mid-dark castle shading, gray bats, path shadows and cool structural transitions.
	317	Pewter Gray	Lighter gray bat wings, crystal-ball contour shading and softened atmospheric details.
	3866	Mocha Brown Ultra Very Light	Crystal-ball highlights, pale path areas, tiny light accents and warm ivory details.
	842	Beige Brown Very Light	Globe rim softness, pale neutral highlights, road transitions and light wreath accents.
	838	Beige Brown Very Dark	Dark crescent moon, pumpkin stem shadows, branch accents and deep warm outlines.
	920	Copper Medium	Pumpkin shadow ribs, deeper orange buds and warm autumn contour accents.
	921	Copper	Primary pumpkin midtone, orange starbursts, buds and warm highlights.
	3778	Terra Cotta Light	Raised pumpkin lobe highlights, lighter buds and soft orange decorative accents.
	680	Old Gold Dark	Deep shadows under the crystal-ball base ridges and darkest gold star details.
	729	Old Gold Medium	Main crystal-ball pedestal, warm stars and tiny lit castle windows.
	3021	Brown Gray Very Dark	Wreath stems, dark leaf veins, muted branch lines and subdued foliage shadows.
	3022	Brown Gray Medium	Primary sage-gray leaves and midtone wreath foliage.
	3023	Brown Gray Light	Leaf highlights, pale wreath details and soft gray-green transitions.

FINAL CHECK

- Crystal-ball rim is smooth, circular and free of flat or doubled sections.
- Castle windows stay small, bright and clean against the charcoal walls.
- Pumpkin rib shading is smooth with consistent vertical direction.
- Wreath leaves remain light enough to frame rather than overpower the center.
- No visible traveling threads across the open ivory background.
- Stars, bats and moons are evenly balanced around the wreath.
- No fabric puckering around dense castle fills or pumpkin lobes.
- All thread ends are secure on the reverse before hoop finishing.

PROJECT NOTES

Filling vs. linework: Fill the castle masses, pumpkins, bats, globe base and larger moons. Keep wreath stems, tree branches, small stars and scattered dots primarily linear.

Edge control: Split-stitch the crystal-ball rim, castle roofs and pumpkin lobes before filling so the final silhouettes remain crisp.

Strand balance: Use 1 strand for tree branches, star marks and small structural lines; reserve 2 strands for pumpkins, leaves and filled globe-base bands.

NEEDLE & FABRIC SETUP

- Use a sharp embroidery needle sized to the strand count; size 7-9 is suitable for most areas.
- Keep the fabric drum-tight but not stretched. Re-seat the hoop before the dense castle and pumpkin fills.

MOTIF THREAD-AND-DIRECTION MAP

Motif	Thread color	Stitch	Strands	Direction	Special note
Crystal-ball rim	3866, 842, 317	Split / whipped backstitch	1-2	Follow full circle	Keep the round outline smooth; use pale highlights sparingly.
Castle + trees	310, 3799, 413, 838	Backstitch / satin / brick	1-2	Walls vertical; branches outward	Preserve tiny gold windows and negative gaps between branches.
Winding path	413, 317, 842, 3866	Long-and-short	1	Curve toward castle	Narrow stitch bands toward the distance to maintain perspective.
Gold pedestal	680, 729, 842	Satin / long-and-short	2	Horizontal tiers	Darken under ridges; keep the top lip clean and symmetrical.
Pumpkins	920, 921, 3778, 838, 310	Long-and-short / split	2	Vertical ribs	Put 920/838 into grooves and 3778 on raised lobes.
Wreath foliage	3021, 3022, 3023	Stem / fishbone	1-2	Stem along arc; base-to-tip	Keep foliage muted so orange pumpkins remain dominant.
Bats + moons	310, 3799, 413, 838	Satin / backstitch	1-2	Compact fill; curve moons	Use 310 only on the darkest bats and stems; gray bats stay visibly lighter.
Stars, buds + lights	921, 3778, 729, 3866	Straight stitch / knots	1-2	Radiating / clustered	Scatter carefully; maintain open fabric between motifs.