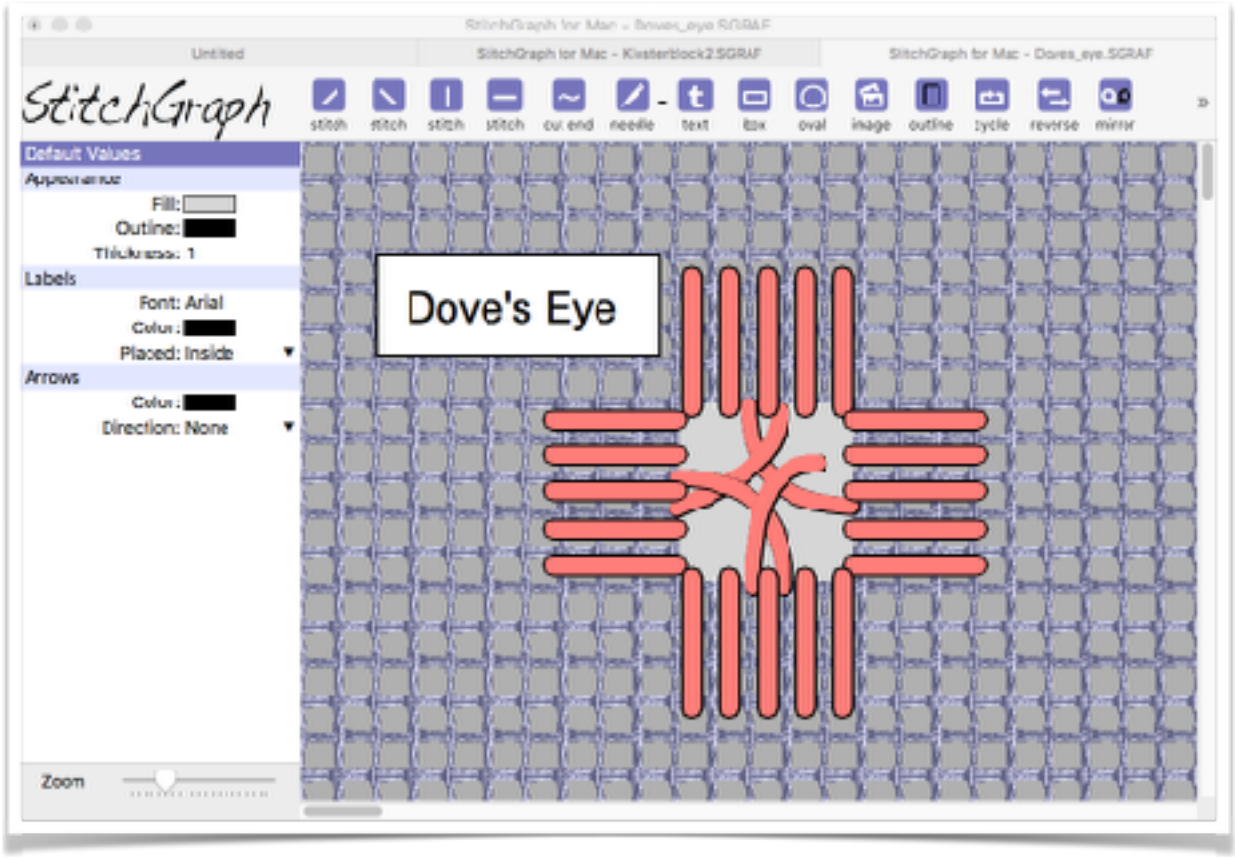
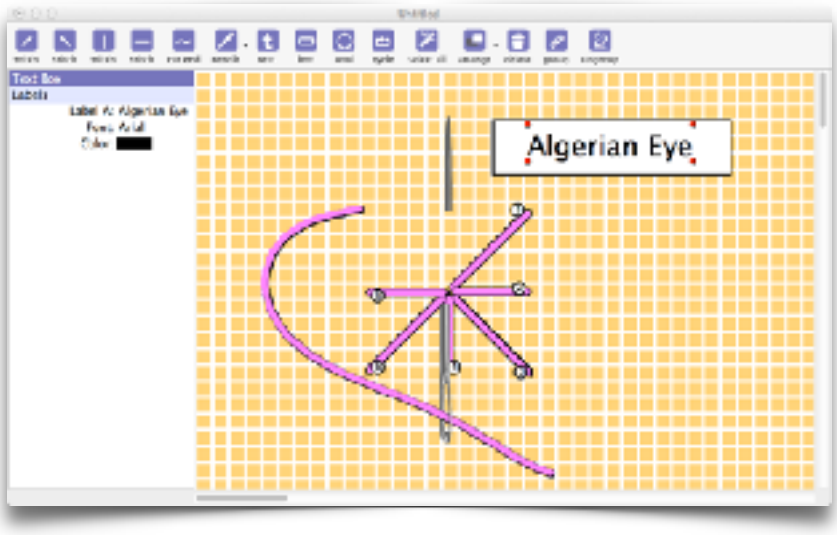
StitchGraph User Guide V1.8



Thanks for buying StitchGraph: the easy way to create stitch layouts for hardanger and other complex embroidery stitch types.

StitchGraph is intended to allow you to create clear illustrations of how to stitch particular stitch types, showing colors, labelling, direction of stitching, and if need be stitches that go behind cloth.

The output can be sent to a printer, a picture file (PNG), or a PDF file, to allow you a lot of flexibility in how you use the result.



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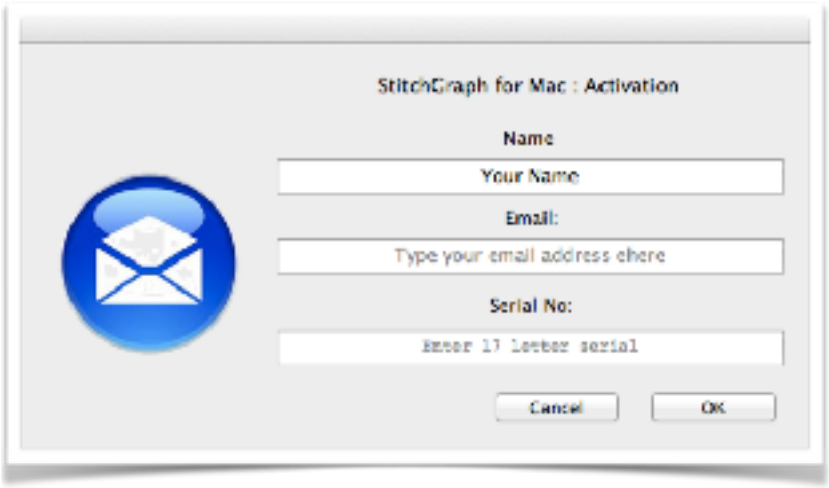
Starting the program.

After installation, you should have an icon for the program on your desktop/start menu (Windows), or in your Launchpad area/ Applications folder (Mac)

Double click the icon to start the application.

Mac and Windows versions of the application are almost identical, apart from menus, where mac menus appear at the top of the desktop screen, and Windows menus appear as part of the document windows.

When the program opens for the very first time, you will be asked to activate it. (This will require your computer to be connected to the internet and not blocking emails by a firewall)



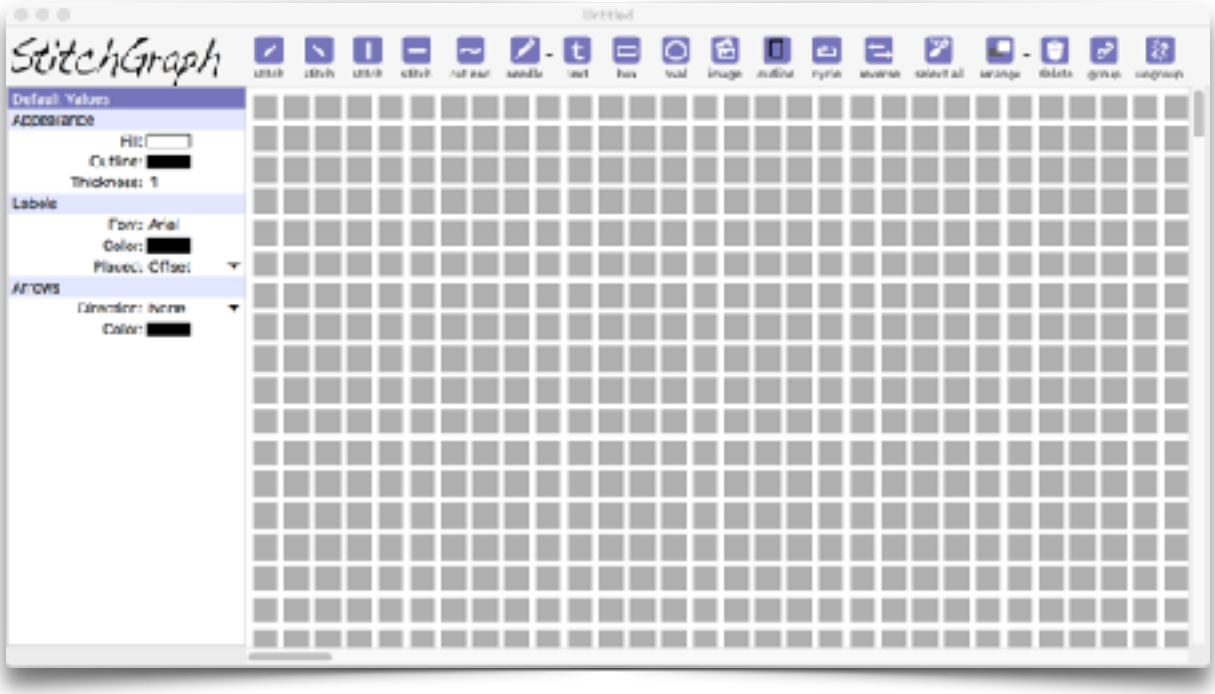
Enter your name, your email address, and the 17 digit serial number you were issued with. The serial number is unique to you, and you are allowed to install the software on two machines (for instance a desktop and a laptop) for your purchase fee.

(If you need to install it more times, please contact us to arrange a modest site licence fee.)

Once registered, you will be taken to the design screen, and the registration window will not re-appear next time you use the application.

The Main Window Layout.

StitchGraph has a simple screen layout, made up of 3 key areas.



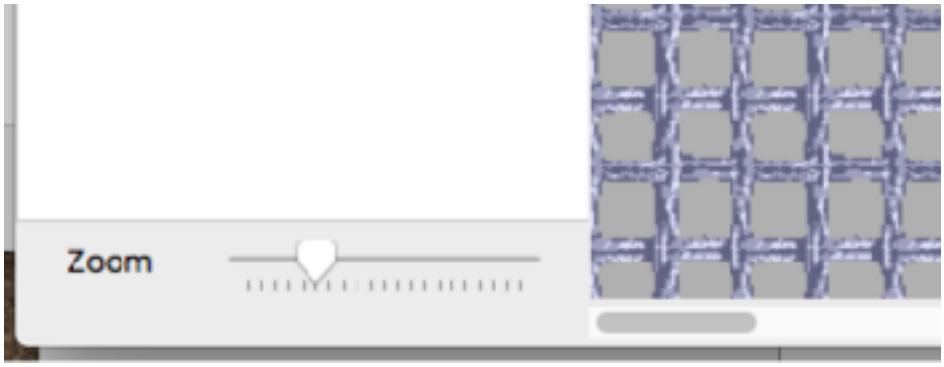
The program begins , like most applications, with a blank chart.

The main area is a grid, over which you will place your stitch diagram.

Along the top is a toolbar holding buttons for inserting stitches, and other common tasks.

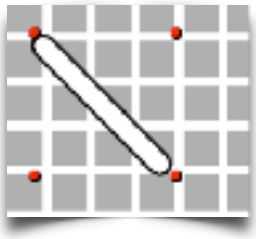
And on the left is the Inspector pane, where you can change the properties of a stitch, such as the inner and outer colors, the labels, arrow color and direction, etc.

At the bottom left hand corner (from version 1.8 onwards) is a slider that can be used to quickly change the zoom size.



Setting Default Properties

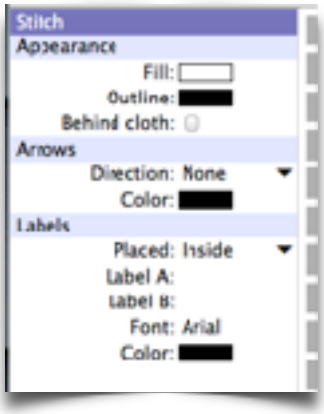
The stitches that you add to the design will normally be white in color, with a black outline.



However, if you plan to work with pale blue or yellow stitches for a while, its a good idea to tell the application that this is your preference.

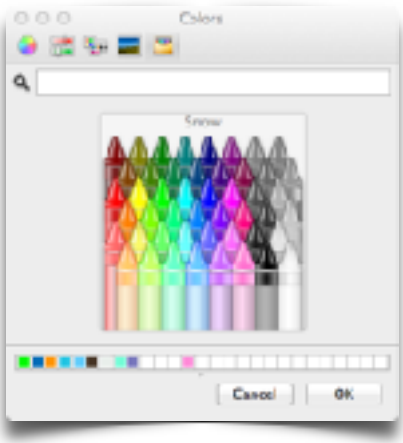
To set the default colors for new stitches, click on the grid once.

This will make the Inspector pane on the left hand edge show the current default values for *new* stitches.



To set the Fill or Outline color for new stitches, click the color box next to either of these items in the Appearance section. (Other default properties can be amended here too.)

A color selector will be displayed. (Mac selector shown here)

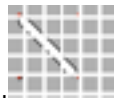
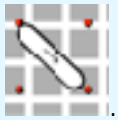


We recommend using one of the ‘fixed lists’ of colors , such as the crayons or the web-safe colors, because then it is easier to find and re-use the same color at a later time for stitches you add later that should be the same color. Both Windows and Mac color selectors have a thin row of favourite colors running along the bottom of the dialog, where you can drag your favourite colors for easy access later.

Click a color to choose it, then click OK

Properties and What They Affect.

There are several types of things that can be added to your chart, and the default properties do not affect them all. Some have properties that can't be set as default values. Click on a stitch on the toolbar to add one to the design, and it will appear in the middle of the window. Click on the stitch itself to select it. When you select an item in this way, the Inspector pane on the left will change to show the properties of that type of item, and you can amend those in the same way as the defaults. Here is a list of the properties you can amend. (Not all properties are available for all objects)

Section	Item	Notes
Appearance	**Fill**	Inside color of stitches and boxes
	Outline	Border color of stitches and boxes
	Behind Cloth	If ticked, this object appears behind the grid. 
	Thickness	A value between 0.3 and 1.5 .. the line can be thicker or thinner than 'the standard' of 1.0
	Lock Shape/Offset	When you have placed a stitch exactly where you need it, you can lock the size, shape, and position relative to the grid. Once locked, it can be moved but it will snap into position when released. IMPORTANT: this operates on individual stitches. If you select a group holding **different types** of locked stitches and move them about, they *individually* snap into place, and may shift with respect to each other, causing the group to change.
Arrows	**Direction**	Can be no arrows, A to B, or B to A The arrow indicates the direction of a straight stitch  .
	Color	The color of the arrow.
Labels	**Placed**	Inside or outside. If inside, then the labels will appear within the border of the stitch. If outside, then they will appear in circles offset from the ends.
	Label A or B	The text which appears at each end of the stitch, or if the object is a text object, Label A is the text.
	Font	You can use any font installed on your system.
	Color	Color of the letters.

Adding Stitches and Other Objects

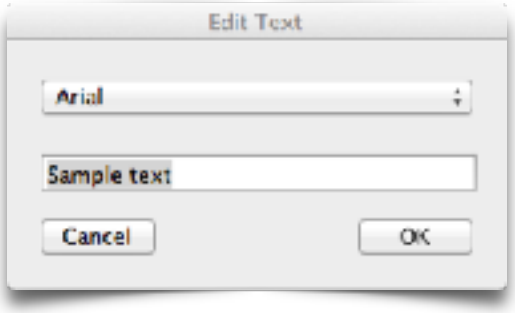
There are 4 types of stitch that can be added to a chart, plus cut ends, needle parts (eyes and points), text, boxes, and ovals.

Using these primitives, you should be able to illustrate most types of stitches

To add a stitch, simply click on the toolbar for the stitch type you need. (Cut ends require a little extra work.. see below)

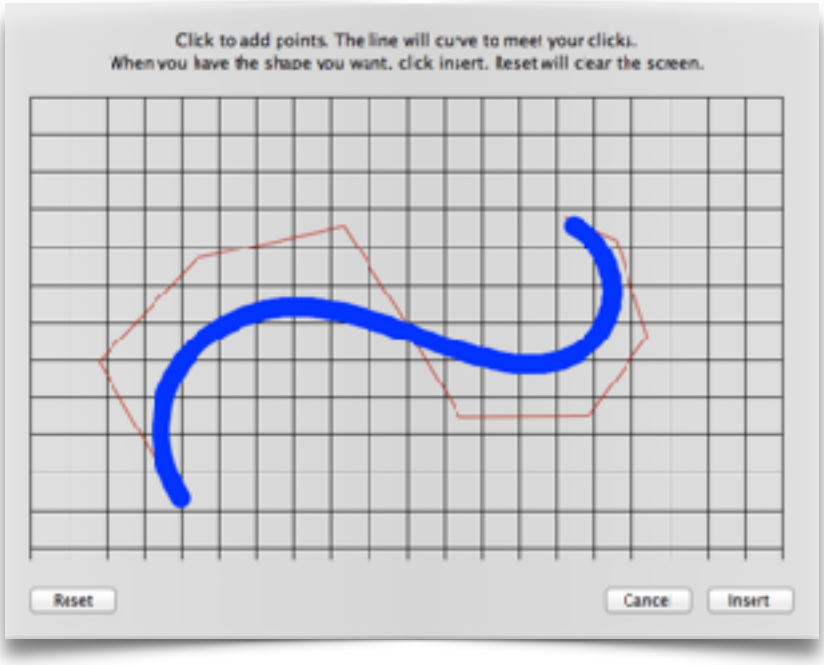
These items are added with a single click, and can be moved or resized once in place:

TEXT: To change text, click on the text and amend it in the Inspector pane, or double click the text and enter the words directly.

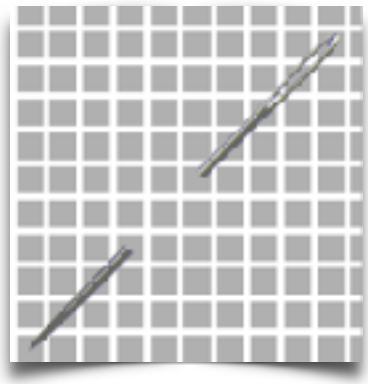


Cut Ends

Adding a cut end requires you to shape a curve. The curve will be formed by following a series of points on a grid. When the dialog appears, click a few times and see how the curve flows to follow your clicks. When you are happy with the shape, click insert. Click Reset to start again if need be.

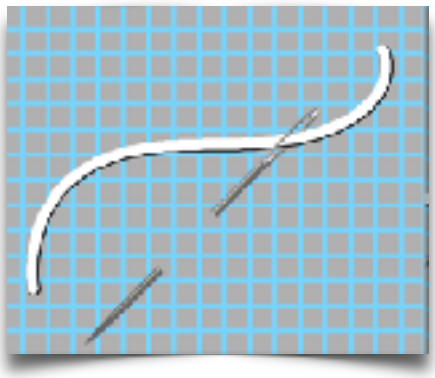


Adding Needles



To add a needle, you need to select a matching eye and a point from the needles button on the toolbar. You can place the eye and the point as far from each other as you wish.Once added, they can be resized and moved like any other object.

To use a needle in conjunction with a cut end, it is important that the cut end is set to be IN FRONT of the needle (to make it appear as if the thread passes through the eye)

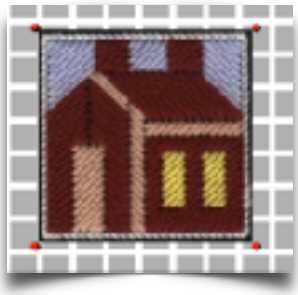


Images

You can insert an image into the chart using this icon:

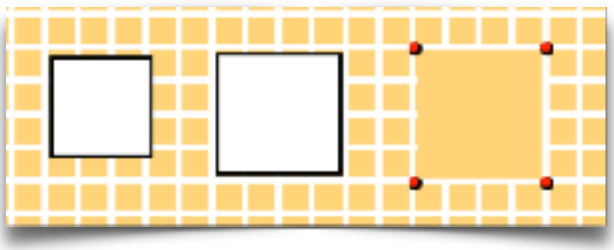
Double click the placeholder to browse for a file:

..And your image will be inserted. (images are saved with the charts)



Cut Out Sections

Some hardanger techniques require you to cut a hole in the cloth.



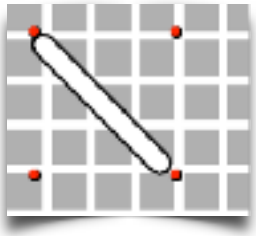
You can simulate a cut section by adding a rectangle, and setting the border and fill colors to match the hole color of the cloth you are using. This diagram shows how, step by step.

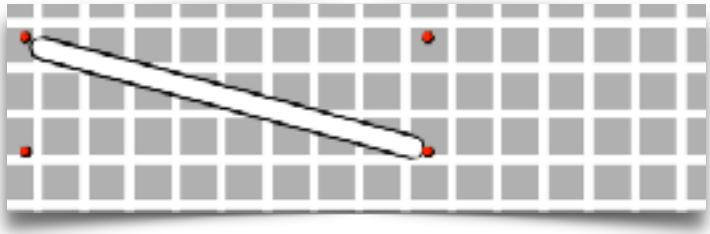
Moving and Resizing Objects.

When you click on a toolbar button, a stitch is added to the design. It will usually not be in the right place, and it will not be the right size.

Click on the object to select it. Selected objects show 4 small red circles at the corners of their ‘effective area’.

These 4 small circles are grab points, and can be used to resize objects. Just click on one of them, and drag the point to a new location, to resize the object.





Also while the object is selected, you can click anywhere within region bounded by the red dots, and drag the object to a new spot using the mouse. Locked objects will snap to place.

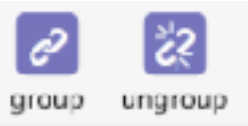
Selecting Several Objects

After selecting an object, if you hold down SHIFT and click on another, you will select them both. You can now drag them both around using the mouse, but resizing only affects one at a time.

You can use the toolbar button **‘Select All’** to select all the objects on screen at once.

Grouping Objects

If you select several objects, you can use the toolbar button Group to make the objects part of a group.



In practice this means that when you click on any one of the objects of a group, they are all selected. You can drag the whole group around at once.

Ungroup clears the grouping and makes them all individual items again.

Deleting Objects

You can delete objects by selecting them, then pressing BackSpace on the keyboard, or using the Delete button on the toolbar.

Duplicating Objects

When one or more objects are selected, you can use the Edit/ Repeat Horizontally or

Edit/ Repeat Horizontally to duplicate the objects exactly one grid space to the right or down. The numbers are the number of copies you get.

So to get a square of 9 stitches, select one, and repeat it horizontally 8 times.

Then select all 8 and repeat vertically 8 times.

Spacing Objects

If you have some items of the same type close to each other and they are not strictly one gap apart, you can select them and use the Edit/Space horizontally (or vertically) menu item and they will be placed one space apart.

Arranging Objects

Objects can lie on top of other objects.

Normally, the most recently added objects appear on top of older ones.

This order can be changed using the Arrange button on the toolbar: you can bring an object to the fore or send it to the back of the 'stack' of objects.

(Note that this is not how you send an object behind the grid: you do that by ticking the 'Behind Cloth' property in the Inspector while the object is selected.)

Reversing Objects

/ and \ lines can be converted to the opposite direction using the 'reverse' icon on the toolbar. Using this option, a selection of stitches like this ///|| would become \\\||

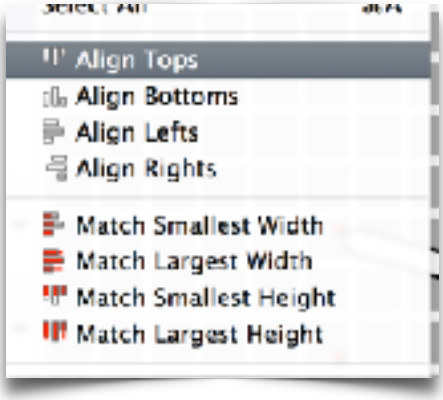
Mirror Function

The Mirror icon on the toolbar allows you to duplicate a selection of stitches, but reversed. Using this button, a selection of stitches like ///|| would become ///|| ||\\\

Aligning Objects

It is common to want to have objects neatly lined up left, right, top etc. Different types of object line up in different ways.

You can get them to line up if you select them , and choose one of the alignment options from the menus.



Here, you can make objects align on one edge.

You can also make the sizes match widths or heights.

(This option will only affect the height of vertical lines, and only the width of horizontal lines)

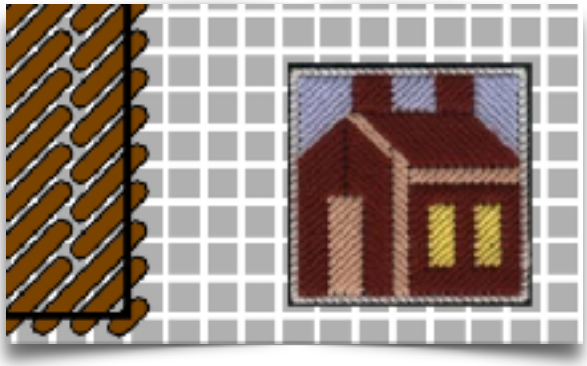
Cycling through the Objects

If the design is full of stitches, it can be difficult to click on the exact object you want. You can cycle between objects , selecting one at a time in order until the correct one is selected, using the Cycle button on the toolbar.

Outlining

When using the software for Plastic Canvas designs, it is common to want to show the boundaries of the plastic.

To do this, we have added 'Outline' mode. Click on this toolbar icon and it will change color to show that it has been selected. Then, using the left mouse button, click or move the mouse over the grid lines. Where you click the mouse, the grid line will turn black. To remove the outline, use the Right mouse button , or CTRL-click on a mac or device with a trackpad.



Zooming in and out

You can change the zoom size in the View menu, under Zoom. While the grid has the 'focus' (clicked on it recently), you can press + or - on the keyboard to achieve the same thing. Or you can use the slider control at the bottom left corner.

Undo

StitchGraph supports many levels of undo. You can undo repeatedly by using the CTRL-Z (windows) or cmd-Z (Mac) buttons.

If you use the Edit menu, you will see that the Undo menu item also shows how many undo items are 'in the queue'. (When the undo items reaches zero, there will be no more undo actions allowed.)

Copy

When you have selected one or more items, you can copy them to the clipboard. Ctrl-C (Windows) or cmd-C (Mac) will copy selected items to the clipboard.

StitchGraph maintains a list of recently copied items too, (up to 10 copies)

Paste

To Paste, use Ctrl-V (Windows) or cmd-V (Mac). This will paste the most recently copied items into the current chart. This also allows you to copy from one chart and paste into another.

You may also paste from the Clipboard history.. choose any of the listed items in the clipboard history in the Edit menu.Saving a Chart

StitchGraph charts have .SGRAF extensions (like text files are .TXT)

If you create a chart , you can save it for later using the Save As.. menu item in the file menu. It will open a save dialog ready to save in the Documents folder.

You can save elsewhere, but we recommend the Documents folder as this is normally backed up automatically by backup utilities if you run one.

Once a chart has been saved, the File / Save menu item allows you to save again without needing a save dialog.

(A saved chart is added to the list of Recent Files)

Opening a saved Chart

StitchGraph charts have .SGRAF extensions (like text files are .TXT)

If you double click on such a file, it should open the StitchGraph application automatically.

If you have the application open, you can browse for an existing saved chart using the File/Open menu item.

If the file you want to open is a ‘recent files’ file, you can open it with a single click from the File/Open Recent menu item.

Starting a New Chart

Simply click File/New in the menus.

Deleting a saved Chart

If you have saved your charts in Documents, they will be easy to find.

Use Finder (Mac) to look in the Documents folder, or Windows Explorer (Windows) to look in your ‘My Documents’ folder.

Find the unwanted chart, and drag it to the trashcan, or right click and choose ‘move to trash’ or ‘delete’.

Printing a Chart

To print a chart, use the File / Print option.

The whole chart will be printed on a page on the default printer.

(You can switch printers and page size using the Print Setup menu item.)

The design will have a blank area around it. The border is based on how far from the top and left of the grid the first stitches are. The right and bottom margins will be the same size as the top and left margins. Unused design area is not exported.

Exporting a Chart to PNG (an image)

To export as PNG, click the File / Export to PNG option.

You will be asked for a file name. The name must end with .PNG

PNG is a high quality ‘lossless’ image format.

The size of the picture is driven by the zoom size on screen. Smaller zoom size, lower quality output.

Exporting a Chart to PDF

To export as PDF, click the File / Export to PDF option.

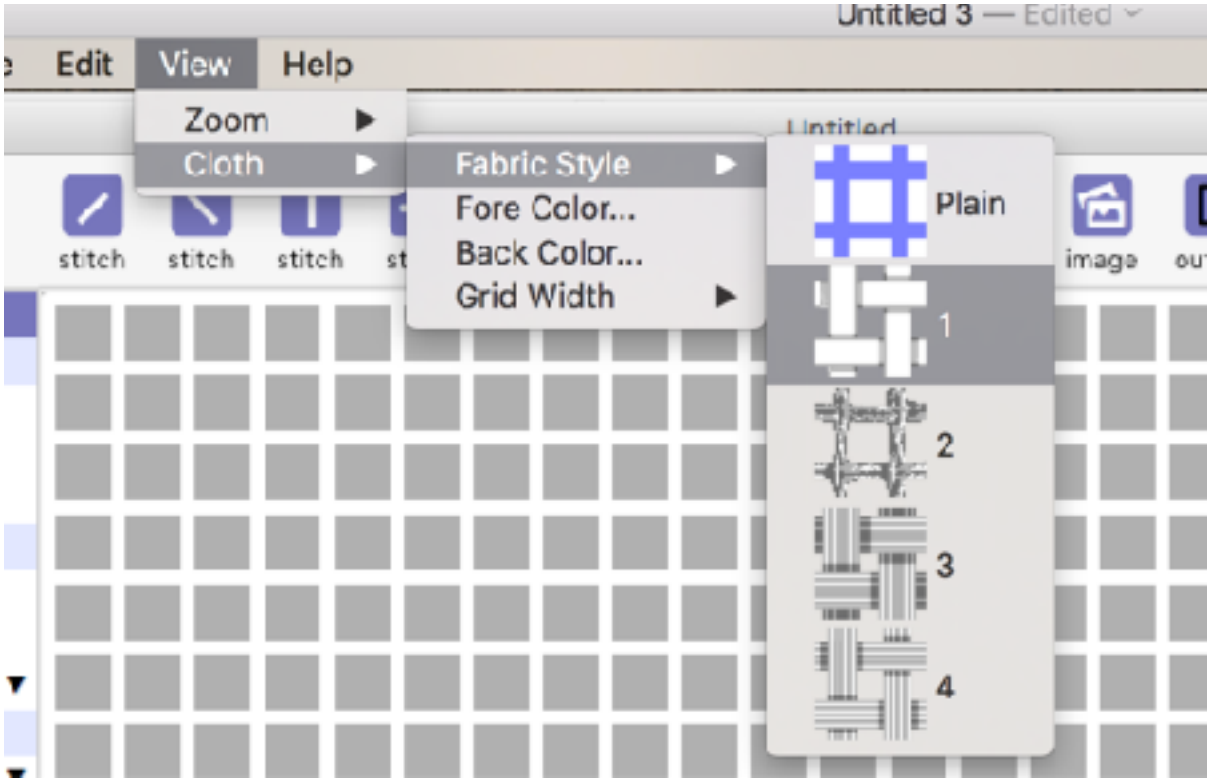
You will be asked for a file name. The name must end with .PDF

The PDF export uses the highest quality output. When the PDF is printed, it should be set to ‘fit to page’

The View menu

The background grid can have a variety of styles and colors. These are set in the View menu.

By default (and on versions earlier than 1.8), the background is a plain grid, where you can change the foreground and background color using the View menu, ‘Coth’ sub menu.



When using the ‘Plain’ style, you can use Fore Color and Back Color to change the grid colors directly.

The ‘Grid Width’ option lets you change the width of the lines.

New to Version 1.8 is the ability to use simulated cloth as a background.

When you do this , the cloth respects the color choices, but the thickness of the lines cannot be changed.

Note that on the closer textured cloths, there is less ‘hole’ showing, which means that any stitches placed ‘behind the grid’ will be harder to see. (You may need to bring them forward in order to place or resize them, for example)

FEEDBACK / YOUR QUERIES

We are always pleased to hear of your experiences, and about any problems.

Both help us improve the app for you, us, and everyone else.

To report a problem, ask a question , or just get in touch, drop an email to

support@ursasoftware.com

Thanks!

Jeff & Deb Tullin. Ursa Software.