

Tips for choosing fabrics

Finding the right fabrics for your own personal goldwork practice can be a journey of discovery - there isn't one size fits all, and the fabrics we choose are a big part of what will make our work OUR work! Here are some tips for thinking about what fabrics to use:

Good qualities to look for:

- Natural - non-stretchy
- Closed weave, medium weight - or heavier
- AVOID: finer, looser, stretchy

Questions to ask yourself about your fabric:

- How does it FEEL to stitch on?
- How well does it hold its TENSION?
- Do I like how my stitching LOOKS on the fabric:
 - Before stitching - laying threads on top
 - After stitching - Does it stand out or blend in like you want it to?

Top tip :

- Build up collections of samples you can choose from
- most online shops offer free or paid for samples
- this is great way to get to know fabrics and understand descriptions

KEEP EXPLORING!

- Just try it!
- Listen to what you enjoy!
- Embrace the fabrics 'mistakes' you make
- What can you learn from it and add to your knowledge of what you like and don't like working on? !

Best Practice

If in doubt, back your fabric with a sturdy CALICO for good tension, extra support and weight.

Backing Fabric Technicalities

- Backing fabrics may show through - think about how a brighter/duller backing changes the tone/feel of your chosen fabric
 - does your 'rough' calico backing dull your bright white cotton? Does your white cotton backing tone down your bold grey?
- To minimise movement of fabrics, tack your fabric onto the backing - with both fabrics without tension and then frame up after. For larger pieces, tack closer into the design to join both fabrics together

A thought to ponder:

Fabrics should be a personal part of our expression as artists!