

TRY THIS

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A STITCH in time



Ideal starter stitches are running stitch, back stitch, satin stitch, and chain stitch. It's something that can be done anywhere at any time and needs no power

Thanks to the pandemic, handcrafted arts like embroidery are enjoying a new-found popularity. Here's how to get started

Learn the basics

As always start with the simplest stitches and the basics. First lesson, teach them to thread the needle. Running stitch, back stitch, stem stitch, lazy daisy stitch, and cross stitch are some of the most basic of all stitches. The best bit? They are used in a wide variety of needlework and sewing projects. Teaching children these simple basics first gives them a good foundation. **Tip:** There are so many preset starter kits available online and YouTube videos for extra help.

You can start teaching needlework to kids as old as 4 years by using thicker needles and threads on a styrofoam plate for practice

time of day when the kids have energy and enthusiasm. Don't force it if they are not showing interest - they might just not take to it. Just smile and try again another time.

Choosing bright fun colours, easy patterns, and spending time together is what makes embroidery fun for kids. Also, making something they can use and enjoy later will keep their interest going. The process has to be more important than the final product.

Let them pick the colours

It's a good idea to just stick to a few colours when working with kids. It cuts down on the complication. Also let them make a choice of colours.

Keep the lessons short

Kids have shorter attention spans than adults. Keep the lessons short, and let them choose the time of day that suits them best. For instance, a weekend is when they are more relaxed. Arrange the lessons for the



Pick the right tools

When it comes to teaching embroidery to kids, equipment is most important - safety first, after all. What you should use: chunkier threads called pearl thread, longer and thicker needles (like tapestry needles), a thimble to avoid getting pricked and good quality hoops. Keep the embroidery fabric soft, but not flimsy. It shouldn't be stiff so it's easier to handle. Also teach them that sharp tools like scissors, needles should be handled with care. Instill good embroidery etiquette: like washing hands before starting embroidery and how to respect your work desk and tools.

Set up a group

Children love to do things with their pals, and its always more fun to learn as a group. Make a party or a playdate out of each lesson. You can even invite one of your friends to bond over threadwork.

Reward good work

Setting up an appreciation system will help in sustaining their interest. Create a wall to proudly display your child's handiwork, start a project like embroidering a patch for their favourite doll or treat them to something special once their project has been completed.



WHY YOU MUST LEARN EMBROIDERY

- Using a needle and thread helps children develop hand-eye coordination. It can teach a child to concentrate and focus
- Develops fine motor skills
- It also allows for the expression of their creativity
- It's a perfect way to get the kids away from the TV, mobile phones, tablets and PCs
- It's an excellent way to have some calm downtime. And also a great bonding time
- Fosters a sense of achievement and boosts their confidence and self-esteem

Once the get the basics right, think of a design project: like decorating a bag, a dress or even a new tablecloth

20 Creative Questions to Ask Kids

- Did you know that asking open-ended, engaging questions is a great way to get to know kids? Creative and critical thinking activities are necessary skills in the classroom - or at home. Academic intelligence is important, of course, but teaching students to think outside the box and explore their creativity is equally important. The idea: ask them to think about these questions, discuss and then write about it. Here are 20 creative questions to ask kids to develop that mindset:
- 1 How would life be different if there were no electricity? List three different ways.
- 2 Explain a flower to someone who has never seen or heard of one before.
- 3 Write a story about the zoo without using the names of any animals.
- 4 Pretend that you get to make one rule that everyone in the world must follow. What rule do you make? Why?
- 5 What kind of soup would you eat for dessert? Write a recipe for dessert soup.
- 6 You can have any three things that you want. In return you must give away three things that are about the same size as the things you get. What do you get and what do you give away?
- 7 What are some ways you could celebrate "Backwards Day"?
- 8 Are you more like a square or a circle? Why?
- 9 How would the game of soccer be different if the ball was shaped like a cube?
- 10 What are three ways the world would be different if people did not need to sleep? What would you do with the extra time?
- 11 What would happen if all the bowling balls and bowling pins in the world suddenly became alive?
- 12 Which do you think is more important: motorised vehicles like cars and airplanes or computers? And why?
- 13 If you could choose one thing that costs money and make it free for everyone forever, what thing would you choose? Why?
- 14 If you could live in a tree house, would you? What are three advantages and three disadvantages to living in a tree house?
- 15 If people could not see colours, how would traffic lights work? Design a traffic system that does not rely on colours.
- 16 What are the 10 most important jobs in the world? Would you want to do any of these jobs when you are an adult?
- 17 Pretend that parents have to take a test before they can have children. Write six questions that would be on the parenting test.
- 18 If you could invent a new subject that would be taught to all children in school, what would the subject be? Why do you think children need to learn about your subject?
- 19 If you could talk to trees, what do you think they might say? Create a conversation between you and a tree.
- 20 Are you more like a river, a lake, an ocean, or a waterfall? Why?



Source: Mindsinblooms.com

FITNESS

Work out anywhere

We might not have the freedom to roam freely, but flexing some muscle under the sun never hurt anyone

Compare a 30-min walk in the park to an hour's labour at the gym. You know which one is less likely to cause you stress or boredom. It's easy to lose track of time and exercise longer when you're working out in a beautiful environment, like a park. Also, exposure to sunlight can help you sleep better at night, improve immune function and increase those feel-good hormones circulating throughout your body. Studies find that people flex their ankles more when they run outside. They also, at least occasionally, run downhill, a movement that isn't easily done on a treadmill. Plus, there is more oxygen available outdoors that enhances the aerobic and fat metabolising capabilities in our body.

TRAIL RUNNING

Find an unexplored trail around your house and make it your running track. Trail running differs from road running and track running in that it generally takes place on hiking trails, where there can be much larger

ascents and descents. It includes anything that is off-road and away from paved surfaces. It could be as simple as a

bike path or just running on the grass, dirt or sand. Runners get a tougher workout because the uneven terrain demands more lateral movements like dodging branches or avoiding rocky patches.

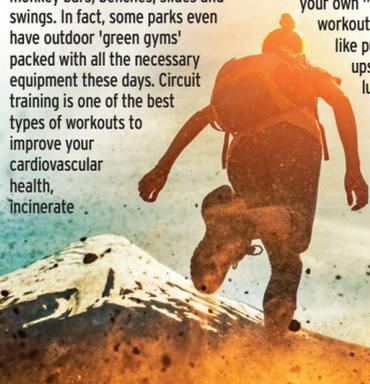
PLAYGROUND TRAINING

Create your own gym at the nearest playground with monkey bars, benches, slides and swings. In fact, some parks even have outdoor 'green gyms' packed with all the necessary equipment these days. Circuit training is one of the best types of workouts to improve your cardiovascular health, incinerate

ANIMAL FLOW

A 100% body weight training programme, animal flow movements can be done in the balcony, in your verandah or on the terrace. Primal-style workouts are one of the hottest new fitness trends. It is all about mastering the movements staying close to the ground inspired by animals.

body fat and build muscle. Add your own "play" to your workout with basics like push-ups, pull-ups, squats, lunges and planks using bars, beams, steps, slides, ramps and more.



Quiz time

CAN YOU ACE THIS BASICS LIFE SKILLS TEST?

Q.1) There are 12 months in a year, but do you know which of these months has 31 days?

- A. June B. March
C. April D. November
(B. Months with 31 days are January, March, May, July, August, October and December. February only has 28 days and 29 days in a leap year, and all other months have 30 days.)

Q.2) One of the easiest things to cook is pasta. How long should pasta boil for?

- A. 5 minutes B. 10 minutes
C. 20 minutes D. 40 minutes
(B. Cooking is one of life's most essential skills. To cook pasta, just let it sit in boiling water for about 10 minutes. Exact cooking times vary from about 8-12 minutes, but if you drain pasta after boiling it for 10 minutes, you will have cooked edible food.)

Q.3) What is the first step of the Heimlich Manoeuvre?

- A. Chest compressions B. Bear hug C. Make a fist D. Stand the person upright
(D. While the Manoeuvre should be performed after a full knowledge, its first step is to get the person to stand upright.)

Q.4) If you're

discarding an old computer, what is the only way to ensure there is no data on the hard drive?

- A. Shredding software B. Powerful magnet C. Bury it D. Destroy it
(D. You can destroy a hard drive however you want, but the key is to be safe. A drill or hammer will work fine or you can ask the help of professionals.)

Q.5) How often should you change your bed sheets?

- A. Every week B. Every two weeks C. Every month D. Every two months
(B. Bed sheets should be changed once every two weeks at the very least. If you sweat at night, you should change them more often.)

Q.6) Where can you find the switch that controls all the electricity for your house?

- A. In the ceiling B. Circuit breaker box C. Behind the toilet D. Under the sink
(B. There may be times when you need to reset or shut down your home's electrical grid, and you'll be able to do that by flipping a switch in the circuit breaker box.)

Q.7) For how long should you let



rice simmer when preparing a pot?

- A. 5 minutes B. 10 minutes
C. 20 minutes D. 40 minutes
(C. To cook rice, pour some rice into a pot of boiling water, let the water return to near boiling, cover the pot, turn the heat to low and let it simmer for about 20 minutes for white rice. For full-grain rice, you'll need at least 30 minutes.)

Q.8) Which of these

options would make for the safest Internet password?

- A. 123456 B. Qwerty1 C. Password D. Xy16?SK!VA26
(D. All passwords should contain a combination of numbers, symbols, lower case and capital letters. A good trick to setting a password is spell spelling with numbers or using systems like the Greek or military alphabets.)

Q.9) At what angle should your ladder lean against the wall in order to safely climb it?

- A. 45 degrees B. 90 degrees
C. 70-80 degrees D. 180 degrees
(C. At 180 degrees, your ladder is flat on the ground. At 90 degrees it is flat against the wall. At about 70-80 degrees, it is leaning into the wall at the perfect angle. At 45, it would be at risk of sliding down the wall.)

Q.10) What is the perfect amount of time for a power nap?

- A. 2 hours B. 10 minutes C. 20 minutes D. 1 hour
(C. Research says 20 minutes is the perfect amount of time to recharge your body, but it takes a lot of practice to master the skill.)

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WORD OF THE WEEK

Smize: smile with your eyes

Years ago when model turned show producer Tyra Banks coined the term smize - smile with your eyes - on her hit show, 'America's Next Top Model', she wouldn't have realised that it would be so important during the Covid era. With so many people hiding their smiles behind masks, smizing is the new smiling. There are online tutorials and articles being written about how to appear friendly when behind a mask. A good way to smize is to first soften your expression and not look like you are staring. Get in a good mood by going to a happy place or memory. Narrow your eyes and squint the bottom of your eye by tightening those muscles right under your lower lid. Under your mask, move your mouth as a hint of a smile. And now you are smizing.

