

# Needlework Class Etiquette

I have collected these ideas from several sources: discussions among those of us who have attended seminar and taken national-level classes, input from other EGA and ANG chapters, and common sense. Special thanks are due to Belle Sprague and Pat Correz from the San Bernardino ANG Chapter for some of their suggestions.

When we offer mini classes as part of our monthly EGA meetings, the atmosphere is very casual. We visit, we talk, we stitch. However, since many of us have not taken a seminar class or a class with a national-level teacher, some points of order are necessary. I'm sure that many of these things have never crossed your mind. You would never intend to interrupt the teacher, talk so loudly that another stitcher cannot hear the teacher, arrive late, or get up and leave during class. However, all of these things cause disruption to the class environment. We seek to provide an atmosphere of fun, learning, and respect during our upcoming class with Nancy Cucci. Even though this list may seem like a lot of "don'ts," these behaviors will help to ensure a calm, peaceful atmosphere to allow optimum learning and fun for everyone and a "stress-less" environment for our teacher.

1. **Make sure that you have your pre-work done:** not half-way done, not almost done, but done (this, of course, is the goal - if you are not 100% done, come anyway. You will just have a bit more trouble filling your boxes if they are not ready to be filled!). The teacher has based her instruction on the fact that all those little boxes are ready to be filled during class.
2. **Remember that (surprise!) you will NOT finish your project within the two days of class.** Most classes will have you work a little bit in several different areas so you know what you are doing, but you are expected to complete the project at home.
3. **Always wear your name tag.** This helps the teacher identify you by name.
4. **Be on time.** Our room will be open at 8:00 a.m. for you to set up and get yourself organized. Class will start at 9:00 a.m. It is considered extremely rude to the teacher if you are not ready to begin when she is ready to begin. This concept also applies to breaks or lunch. If we have a ten minute break, please be ready to start again on time. Additionally, **please do not leave class while the teacher is teaching.** Wait for an appropriate break time.
5. **TURN OFF YOUR CELL PHONE, OR SET IT TO VIBRATE.** We don't need several different musical tones ringing out throughout class.

6. **Contain your stuff.** While our room is large and we do have room to spread out, please be aware of your neighbor's space and do not let your supplies encroach upon her area.
7. We mentioned this in the Supplies list last month, but it bears repeating. **If you plan to use a light, you must bring a portable power source** to plug into as we do not want cords on the floor to trip Nancy as she moves around the classroom. Of course, the room is very bright and you might not even need a light.
8. **Please refrain from wearing perfume, cologne, scented bath products.** Many stitchers are severely allergic to scents and it is not pleasant to be held captive in a room all day with a splitting headache - caused by someone else's perfume. It's hard to concentrate on stitching when you have a headache or you can't breathe. Thanks for remembering to leave scented products at home.
9. **Listen to the teacher.** That is what you are paying for - HER instruction, not your neighbor's suggestions. If you don't understand an instruction, or need help with a stitch, ask for help from the teacher, not your neighbor.
10. **Please do not interrupt the teacher's train of thought while she is instructing.** Wait until the appropriate time to ask her - AFTER she is done with her instructions. Often, if you are just a bit patient, she will address your question before you even need to ask it. She has taught this class many times and is well aware of where stitchers might have problems.
11. **Do not talk to your neighbor while the teacher is teaching.** There is nothing worse for a teacher than to try to talk over several side conversations going on while she is trying to explain something. When the teacher is done instructing, there will be plenty of time to visit and share with your neighbor; in fact, that is a very fun aspect of taking a class. However, when everyone is stitching, keep your conversations with neighbors low key. Some people enjoy chatting while working while others prefer a quiet atmosphere, especially while counting.
12. **Put down your needle when the teacher is talking.** You may think you already know what to do, or conversely, you may be way behind, but it will be much more difficult for you if you don't pay attention to what the teacher is telling you. Additionally, some teachers consider it rude if you continue to stitch and do not give them eye contact during explanations.
13. **Class is not the place to "do your own thing."** If the teacher presents one way of doing something and you've always done it differently, don't challenge the teacher or take class time to explain how you've always done it. Try the new way, OR, if you're going to do it your own way, do so quietly.
14. **Do not monopolize the teacher's time.** This is a group project, not one-on-one instruction. Ask questions when needed, but remember that the teacher needs time to get around to everyone in the class.

15. **No food or drink on the tables during class.** Keep your drink in a **CLOSED** container and keep it on the floor next to you. Large cups from fast food places with straws coming out the top are dangerous in a stitching environment as they are so easy to knock over. We don't need an accidental spill.
16. **Respect copyright laws.** Workshop directions are not to be copied for friends or taught to another class without permission from the teacher.
17. **No visitors are allowed during class.** Such visits are disruptive both to the teacher and to those who have paid for this class. Additionally, if you are attending the September meeting, but are **not** taking the class, please do **NOT** try to visit with those taking the class. It causes unnecessary noise, it disrupts nearby stitchers, and it may irritate the teacher.
18. Finally, **come to class with an attitude of adventure.** You will be experiencing a national-level, seminar-style class and you are bound to learn something new. We are so fortunate to have Nancy as our teacher. Enjoy your interaction with her. Her classes are relaxed and fun. Remember: Classes are usually a lot of hard work (concentrating), but they are also a **lot of fun!** As \*Chottie Alderson always said: "If it isn't fun, it isn't needlepoint!"

Happy Stitching!  
Debby Lambert

\*Chottie Alderson was one of the pioneers of modern needlepoint. She was most active in the 1970s and 80s. She contributed many excellent designs, and created many of the stitches we use all the time today. She was one of the first to move us away from exclusive use of Persian wool and into using many other threads for our stitching. She lived in Lake Arrowhead, CA and was very active in the San Bernardino area, teaching many, many classes (including my very first needlepoint class). And, she was always a lot of fun!