

Flat Peyote Stitch Scallop Shell Amulet Bag

So you want to learn to do the peyote stitch? It's really not very hard if you think of it in the right context. You know how to follow a cross stitch pattern. How many non-stitchers have said to you, "I could never learn to do that", yet you know how simple it is to just follow the pattern. That's what peyote stitch is too!

Obviously there are some differences between cross stitch and peyote stitch. First of all, you don't have a ground fabric to work with. In fact, that's what you are creating when you do the peyote stitch. The next difference is your stitches are not all in a line. Instead, every other row is offset like a brick wall:



The first thing you need to do is to create your rows. Before you start, cut a piece of beading thread approximately 36" long (about hand-to-hand, shoulder width apart). Thread your needle, stretch the thread a little, then run the thread over beeswax or Thread Heaven. Put a stop bead about 6" from the end of your thread by looping back through the bead once. Be careful not to split the beading thread with your needle!

The next thing you need to do is to string the correct number of beads on your thread. For this project you need 43 beads of your background color. In general, you can determine how many beads you need by counting rows 1 and 2 on your pattern. Look at Figure 1, then count rows 1 and 2 to confirm that 43 beads is correct. After you have strung the beads, count them again, then recount them. Doing this now will help to prevent problems later!

The next few rows are going to feel very awkward, but trust me – after you have a few rows in you will have something more substantial in your hand and it will feel much better. So persevere with it!

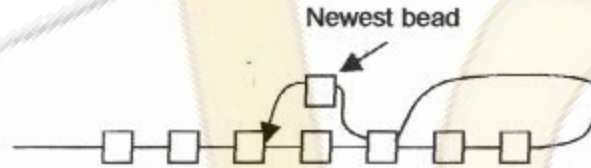
You are probably wondering "how do I start"???? Pick up another background bead, then insert your needle through the third bead, like so:



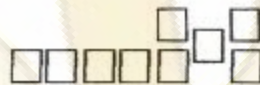
When you pull your needle through, the last two beads should sit on top of each other, like so:



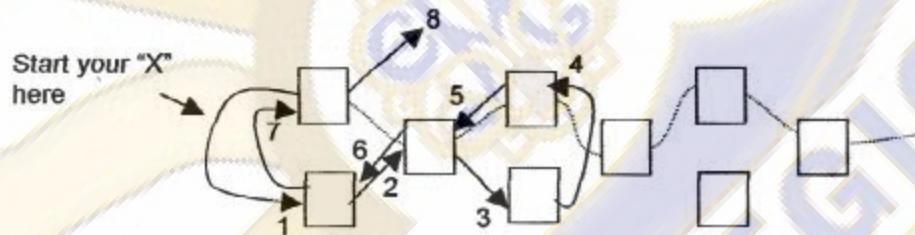
Next, add a bead, skip a bead, then insert your needle like so:



As before, when you pull your needle through the beads should sit on top of each other like so:



Continue in this fashion all the way across the row. When you get to the end you should have added 23 new beads, and your thread should be just hanging there with no where to fasten the last bead. Here's the "tricky" part. You are going to have to do a modified figure 8 or an "X" to turn for the next row. Insert your needle through the beads like so, following the numbers:



You are ready to start row 4. Just add your beads all the way across, following the pattern. Continue through rows 5, 6, and 7 as well, doing your modified figure 8 at the end of the odd numbered rows. But if you'd rather try something different, here is a diagram to do a half hitch at the end of the odd rows.



At row 8 you are going to have to start following the pattern. But remember, it's just like following a cross stitch pattern! You stitch on beads based on the pattern. Keep going until you finish the final row (row 59). You are finished one half of the amulet bag.

Do the same thing for the other side of the bag. But now you have two pieces that are identical – what do you do??? It's simple – you'll just add one more row of beads at the bottom of one of your pieces. Look at Figure 2. The red beads are the new ones you will add. This will allow you

to “zip up” your bag. All this means is that the two pieces will fit together because you’ve added this new row. Stitch the two pieces together (like a zipper), then slip stitch the sides together. You are ready to add your necklace strap and your fringe!

Attaching the necklace strap

Using your spiral chain necklace, if you have 8 inches or more of thread at one end of the chain thread your needle with that thread. Otherwise, attach a new thread to the spiral chain using the “starting a new thread” technique. Starting at the point where you want the chain attached (a corner of the bag), run the thread through several beads, changing directions and sides of the bag, incorporating knots through the existing beads, until you run out of thread. Cut the thread close to the bag. Do the same with the opposite end of the spiral chain.

Fringe

This is where your creativity comes in! You need to think about how you want your amulet bag to look. There are many variations you can use, like so:



And then there is my favorite – the twist. Think about incorporating larger beads, accent beads, bead caps, colors, textures, shells, accents, etc, etc, etc. This is the fun part!!! But remember that all fringe has to be firmly attached to the amulet bag. Can you imagine walking down the street with your beads trailing behind you? That would be a tragedy!

Helpful Hints (Hopefully!)

Starting a new thread – When you have about 4” of thread remaining, weave your old thread back and forth through existing beads. Change direction at least three times. Thread up as before, then insert the needle in the diagonal line where you want to continue beading (at least 6-7 rows back). Run the needle through 2-3 beads on the diagonal, then pull the thread almost all the way through, leaving a 2” tail. Loop around the core thread, run the needle through the loop, then pull the thread tight. The knot you created will slide into the next bead – you’ll never see it again! Repeat this process a couple more times, until your needle comes out at the end of your work. You are ready to start again! Leave the hanging tail for now, or clip it very close to your work.

If you have to “unbead”, always unthread your needle and remove the beads with your hand. If you try to unstitch the beads, you run the risk of splitting a thread and ending up with a tangled mess that you’ll have to cut out.

Enjoy!!!!

Instructions for a Beaded Spiral Chain

Before you start, cut a piece of beading thread approximately 36" long (about hand-to-hand, shoulder width apart). Thread your needle, stretch the thread a little, then run the thread over beeswax or Thread Heaven. Put a stop bead about 6" from the end of your thread by looping back through the bead once. Be careful not to split the beading thread with your needle!

Step 1 – Pick up four beads of your core color and three beads of your outside spiral color.

Step 2 – Holding the seven beads in your left hand, loop back with your needle and run it through beads 1, 2, 3, and 4 as shown on the diagram. (You will always stitch through core beads, and never stitch through outside spiral beads!) Pull the thread all the way through the beads.

Step 3 – Add one new core bead and three new spiral beads, shown as beads 8, 9, 10, and 11 on the diagram.

Step 4 – While holding the first outside spiral to the right hand side, insert the needle through beads 2, 3, 4, and 8 as shown on the diagram. This will feel a little awkward, but will get better as the chain gets longer. Pull the thread all the way through the beads as before. Now you have your second outside spiral group.

Always keep the new spiral group pushed to the right, and add new groups to the left. Repeat steps 3 and 4 until your chain is as long as you want it to be. 29" works for me, but you may need to adjust the length.

Helpful Hints (Hopefully!)

Starting a new thread – When you have about 4" of thread remaining, remove your needle from the old thread and just leave the old thread hanging. You'll weave it back in later, after you have some new beads to weave it through. Thread up as above, then insert the needle about 1.5" from the end of your work. Run the needle through several beads, then pull the thread almost all the way through, leaving a 2" tail. Loop around the core thread, run the needle through the loop, then pull the thread tight. The knot you created will slide into the next bead – you'll never see it again! Repeat this process a couple more times, until your needle comes out at the end of your work. You are ready to start again! Leave the hanging tail for now, or clip it very close to your work.

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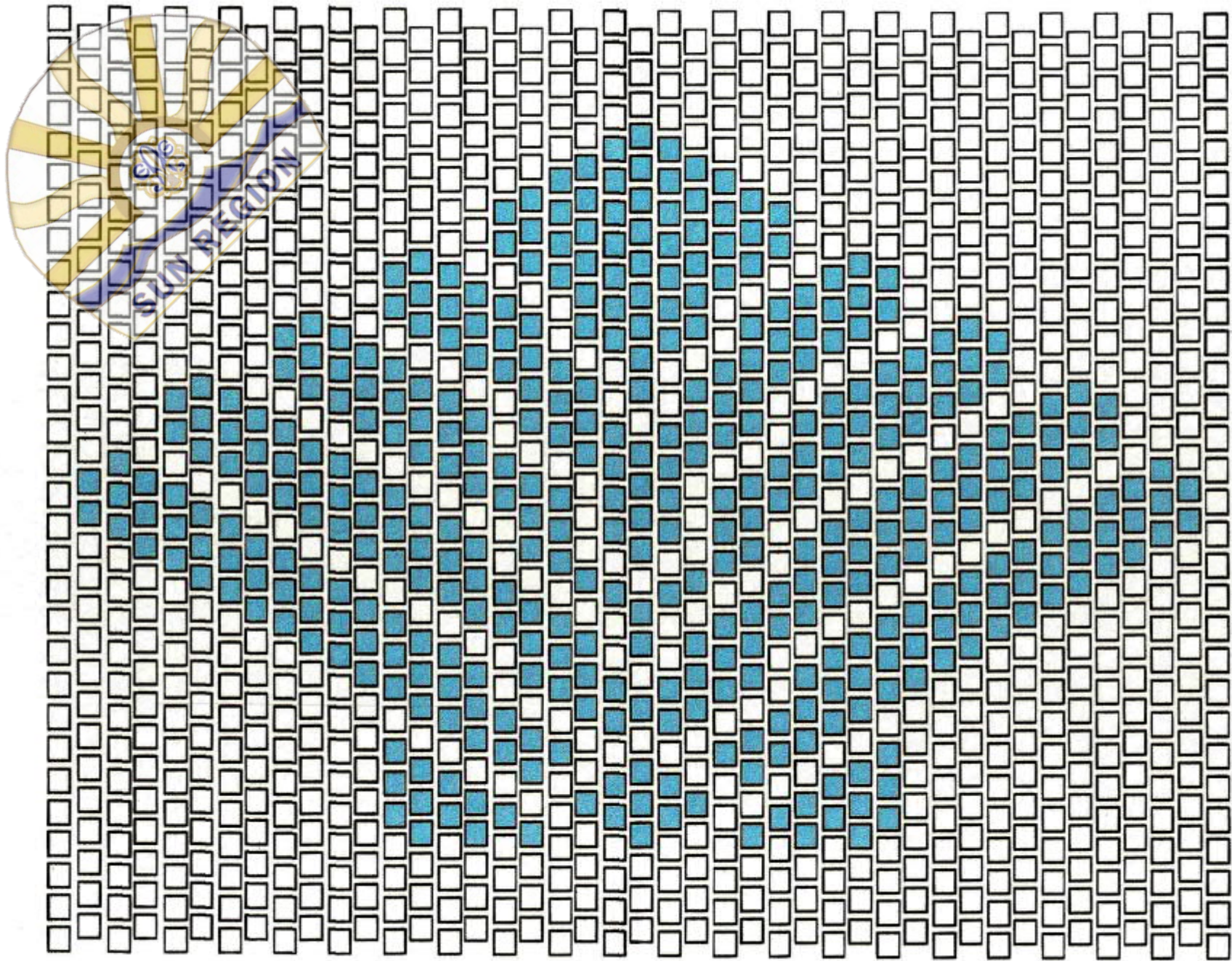


Figure 1

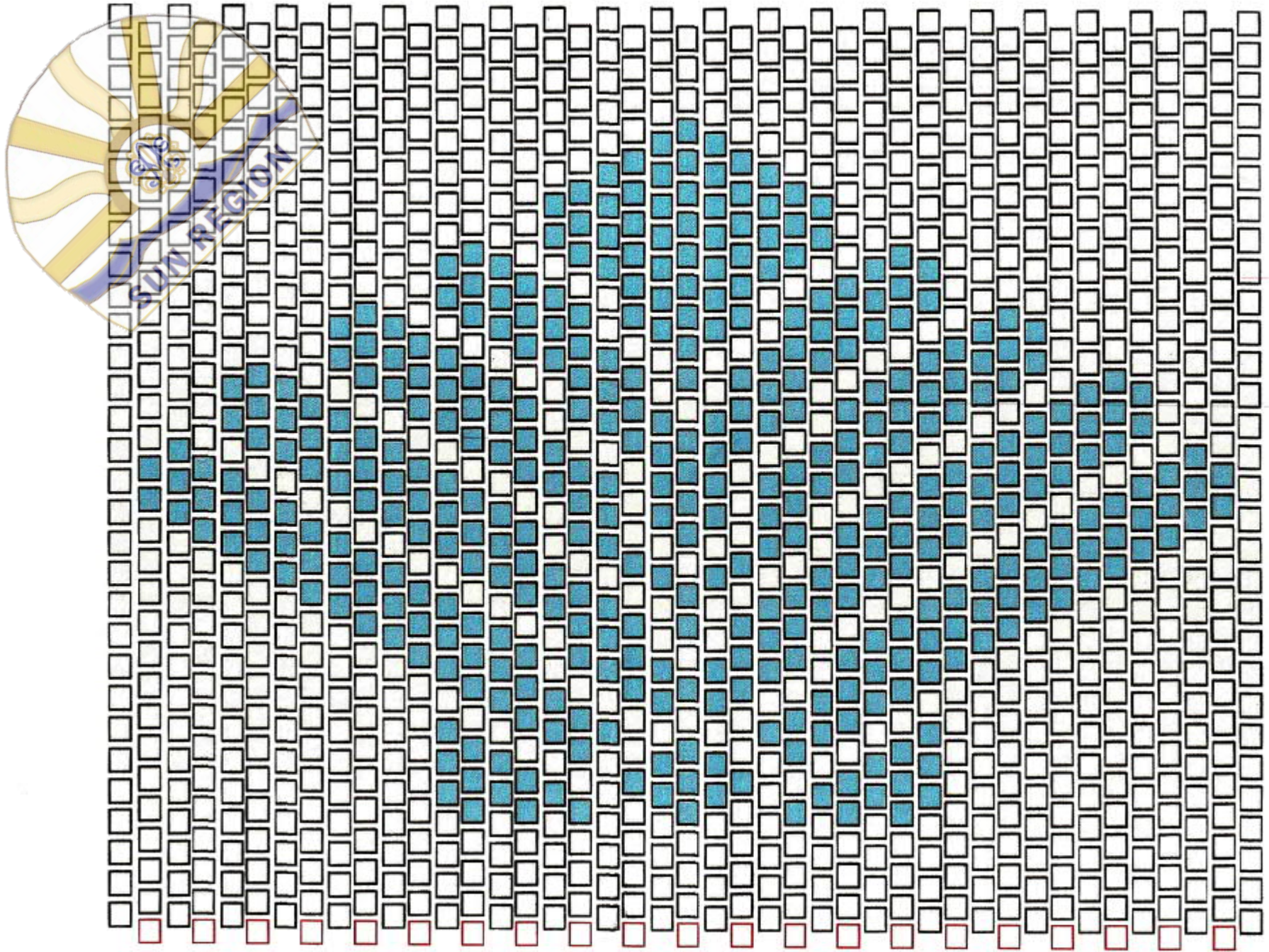


Figure 2