

Finishing Instructions for The Secret Garden



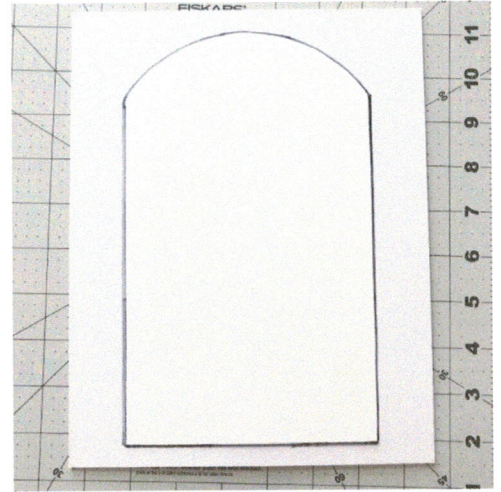
I designed this piece to be finished as a garden gate. This can be done as simply or as elaborately as you would like.

I chose to finish mine in a wooden 8 X 10 shadow box with a hand cut mat featuring a curved top and bundles of imitation flowers and foliage glued around the edge to give it more of a garden feel.

Required materials:

- 8 X 10 shadow box
- 8 X 10 green frame mat
- Sharp craft or box knife
- Imitation flowers and foliage
- Green craft wire
- Hot glue gun
- Sharpie (alternatively pen or pencil)
- Cardboard for cutting on
- Paint to match your mat color

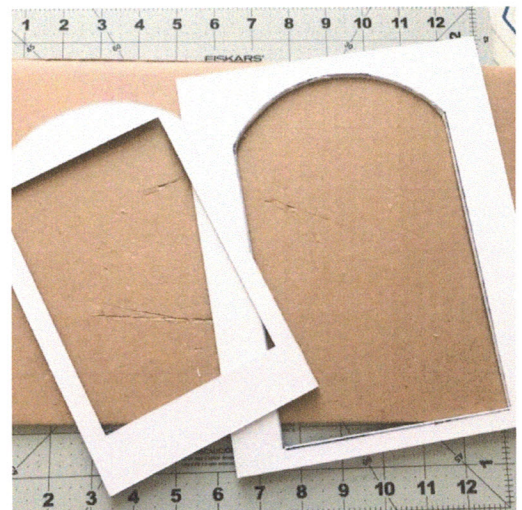
1. Print and cut out the gate shape provided to you in this file. Place it over your stitching to make sure that it is the proper size as some fabrics differ slightly in their sizing. You don't want any stitching to be visible around this paper cutout. If stitching is visible, you may need to create a slightly larger template to fit your work.



2. Once it is determined that the size of your template is correct, take your mat frame and turn it over to the back. Carefully center your template and tape it in two places to secure it in place. Using a sharpie, pen, or pencil, trace around your template on the mat. You'll need to fill in the places where the tape was after it is removed.

3. We will now cut out the gate shape with a sharp craft or box knife. If you have never cut a mat before it is very important to note that you are NOT attempting to cut through the entire mat on your first pass. It will require several passes over the same line to cut all the way through. It is vital to make your first pass very precise, as your knife will follow this line with all other passes. *You may wish to place the mat on top of a piece of cardboard while cutting to protect your work surface from being damaged as your knife passes through the mat.*

4. For your first cutting pass you can use a ruler to help make your lines straight and take the curve very slowly to make sure you are getting the cut just right. Don't use a lot of pressure as we are only trying to pierce the first layer of the mat in order to create a guiding line for the rest of our cuts.



5. Now that you have your first cut put into the mat, you can begin to apply more pressure. Your knife should stay within the confines of your first cut, but it's always a good idea to go slowly to make sure that your knife does not stray.

6. Continue to make passes until your knife passes cleanly through the mat.
7. Once your gate shape has been cut into your mat, you can paint the inside where you cut to match your mat color. This is optional but it will help to hide any imperfections in your cutting that will be visible if left white.

If you wish to put your work in a standard frame and not a shadow box with the added foliage, you can skip to step 10.

8. Harvest small bundles of your imitation flowers making sure to leave small stems at the end to tie them all together using green wire. You want your bundles to be small enough that when situated how you want them, they do not hang over the edge of your mat.



9. Using hot glue, attach the flower and foliage bundles to your mat.

10. Place your finished mat on top of your cross stitch and situate it exactly how you wish it to appear when fully finished. The hinges are meant to touch the left side of the mat with no space in between to give the appearance of the gate being attached.

11. Once everything is in place, trace around the outside of your mat onto your fabric to create your finishing lines.

12. You can now finish the cross stitch however you would like to the size of the lines we just drew. For example, you can insert a piece of cardboard and either glue or lace the fabric onto the cardboard. I decided that the Aida fabric seemed sturdy enough that I simply cut my fabric along our finishing lines and inserted it into the frame behind my mat. If you stitched on linen you probably do not want to cut the fabric because it may not be sturdy enough to lay flat inside the frame without support.

