

Magnifying Light For Needle Painting

Firstly let me emphasise that light is essential for this type of embroidery. It is virtually impossible to see the details in our stitching without aid. No matter how good your optician/eye sight is you won't be able to see the little details - this has been proved time and again by students in my workshop who insist that they have been stitching for years without help (or a good pair of specs) but when they see their work through the eyes of a magnifying lamp are amazed at the difference it makes. Comments such as:



I can't believe how awful my stitching looks I had no idea.

I can see each little stitch clearly, now I know where to place them.

I can see the little gaps that weren't there before.

If you are serious about your needle painting and would like to pursue this technique further you will need to invest in a magnifying lamp.

Light

It should be emphasised that it is the *light* that helps us to see our work more clearly. Magnification, on its' own without any light is pointless, it will simply make a dull area bigger, therefore light is ESSENTIAL.



In an ideal world we would do our stitching outside in full natural daylight, but besides the fact that it is difficult to stitch in the heat of direct sunlight, or the freezing cold of winter, we might be plagued by bugs or get blown away by wind – it is not always possible to ensure we have the perfect conditions to work outside. I know I do most of my stitching at night or indoor with the air conditioner on a hot day. Therefore we need to simulate this natural daylight indoors.

Daylight

Daylight helps us to see all the little details, reduces eye strain and allows us to work for longer periods at a time. A daylight lamp on its own will be handy but the ideal combination is light and magnification.

Note we are *not* talking those nifty little clip on reading lights which may be fine for cross stitch but are hopeless for needle painting - we are talking about daylight such as 22W or 28W strength. (more on this in option below).



Not these please!

Magnification

A magnifier enhances the lit up area of our stitching by making it bigger. As mentioned before magnification on its' own is of no value it will simply make a dim picture bigger, but the combination of light and magnification is perfect. It will light up your world and make everything come clear!

If you can't afford a magnifying light combination an adequate substitute is to buy a pair of reading glasses in the magnification that suits you, i.e. 1.5X/1.75X/ or 2.2X etc. Make sure that these fit snugly on top of your prescription glasses and you will have instant magnification. It works better than the clip on magnifiers which are a little clumsy.!



Options

There are numerous options available to us today and manufacturers of daylight lamps are progressing all the time, producing lights that are more powerful, lighter and more portable as we speak. Like anything else, you get what you pay for – so ideally if you purchase the top of the range magnifying lamp then that is what you will get, and it will be a lifetime investment that is a joy to use, however if your budget is lean there are alternatives which we will talk about below.

So what do we look for when purchasing a magnifying lamp:

Light = minimum of 11W daylight bulb (equivalent of 60W) up to 28W daylight bulb (equivalent of 100W)

Lens viewing area = minimum of 13cm/5" – to 17.5cm/7".

Magnification = 1.75x to 2.25x (1.75 should be fine for most needs).

I have listed the options as Non Portable, Portable & Cost Saving – most of these can be found at the Daylight Company UK/USA/AUSTRALIA

<http://uk.daylightcompany.com/>

NON PORTABLE

These are larger lamps (more powerful) and generally not very portable, although they can be clamped onto a desk if necessary. I have one of these that I use next to my comfy chair at home so that I am part of the family TV viewing.

Option One: ESD Ultra Slim Magnifying Lamp D22091 –top of the range, can be viewed here:

<http://uk.daylightcompany.com/product/esd-ultra-slim-magnifying-lamp/>

Option Two: Ultra Slim Magnifying Lamp XR D22080 – excellent, this is the one I have. Can be viewed here:

<http://uk.daylightcompany.com/product/ultra-slim-magnifying-lamp-xr/>

Option Three: Slimline Magnifying Lamp, White D22030-01 – a little smaller but excellent. Can be viewed here: <http://uk.daylightcompany.com/product/slimline-magnifying-lamp-white/>

Option Four: 7" Magnifying Lamp DN1030 – excellent. Can be viewed here:

<http://uk.daylightcompany.com/product/7-magnifying-lamp/>



PORTABLE

These are slightly smaller lamps which can be taken to workshops, ideal for travel and also used at home.

Option One: New PURElite Three-in-One Magnifying Lamp. Available at numerous online needlework outlets you can view it at Amazon here:

<http://www.amazon.co.uk/New-PURElite-Three-in-One-Magnifying-Lamp/dp/B00426QMAA>

PROS - This is the best portable magnifying light that I have come across to date.

It has a large 15cm lens with 2X magnification and is surrounded by 21 LED lights

that never have to be replaced in our lifetime. It has 3 options, a floor stand,

table clamp and table top stand. I take this to all my workshops it fits into a

small computer bag which I purchased specifically and weighs approx. 1.5kg so

you can take it on the plane. The best thing is that it has a battery pack which last approx. 5 hours!

CONS – the clamp that the manufacturers supply does not fit on very thick table tops. I had to have a clamp made – if the manufacturers would consider supplying a screw type adjustable clamp then it would be perfect.



Option two: 5" Magnifying Lamp DN1020 – good, useful for travel and workshops. Can be viewed here: <http://uk.daylightcompany.com/product/5-magnifying-lamp/>

Option three: Mag Lamp, White D21000-01 – adequate although viewing area is small and light not as bright as could be. Can be viewed here: <http://uk.daylightcompany.com/product/mag-lamp-white/>

COST SAVING

Option One: Table Magnifying Lamp DN1040. Good little lamp. Can be viewed here: <http://uk.daylightcompany.com/product/table-magnifying-lamp/>

Option Two: Twist portable lamp, white D33700. A good little light, can be used in combination with clip on magnifiers or reading glasses. But if you are going to spend that amount on a light why not get one of the magnifying lamps instead? Can be viewed here:

<http://uk.daylightcompany.com/product/twist-portable-lamp-white/>

Option Three: A reading lamp with a daylight bulb that can be purchased at any good lighting shop or supermarket plus a pair of reading specs on top of your prescription specs can work. Not the ideal solution but better than nothing.

Conclusion

There are many other brands of magnifying lamps available on the market such as OTT-LITE that I am not familiar with. As long as they meet the requirements set out above then they will be good.

Remember that this is an investment in your love for stitching – it is not a WANT it is a NEED. Ask your family to get you one for your birthday/Christmas – give up a haircut or trip to the dentist – or put a jar next to the bed.....!

