

lost in cross stitch

Cross Stitch Patterns and Printables to happily lose yourself in

9 Ways to Spot AI Charts

AI can produce a gorgeous image in seconds, but a gorgeous image isn't a tested chart. Here's what to look for before you buy. No single point is proof on its own, but the more of these you tick, the more carefully you'll want to look before you click 'buy'.

Look at the image

1. **Zoom right into the shading.** Real cross stitch shades in stitches of whole colour. If you can see a gradient of more than one colour inside a single stitch, it's very likely AI. (Except for tweeding, which is a strand each of separate colours.)

2. **Check the colour count.** Look for dozens or more shades for a fairly simple subject. Faking gradients creates a huge palette, and it can end up with a load of confetti stitches.

3. **Look for full coverage.** Backgrounds can be left blank to show fabric. This is a clue that the design may be AI, not proof, since some AI chart sellers do remove the background.

4. **Look at the backstitch.** Long, smooth, sweeping curves that ignore the grid aren't stitchable. Quick test: a truly round circle is impossible in backstitch, it always has little flat steps. A perfect circle probably means AI.

5. **Look for things that make no sense.** Extra fingers, a cat with odd paws, a face that's not quite right, lettering that turns to gibberish when you actually read it.

6. **Check the symbols.** On a chart preview, symbols should be easy to tell apart. A huge palette often means a mass of similar symbols that can be confusing.

Read the listing

7. **Check the size and stitch time.** A human-created listing probably states stitch count and finished size. Tens of thousands of stitches for a simple-looking piece is the gradient tax. Vagueness about the numbers can be its own warning.

Check the seller

8. **Read the reviews closely.** Verified shop reviews, not "ooh lovely" Facebook comments. Only about one in ten buyers reviews, so few reviews on a small listing means nothing on its own. Look for whether it stitched up like the photo.

9. **Look at the whole shop.** A brand new shop with hundreds of wildly different, highly detailed designs is questionable. An established retailer with many named designers is fine.

Every pattern in our shop is charted by hand. Browse them at shop.LostInCrossStitch.com

Remember: a software-rendered preview image is not the same as an AI pattern. Nearly every designer uses charting software, including DMC. Human-made charts mean that a human designer chose the placement of every stitch.