

MACHINE EMBROIDERY BASICS



hoop

Use the hoop size that is appropriate for your design. Don't use a large hoop for a small design because it wastes stabilizer.



scissors

Small scissors with a curved edge are handy for trimming stabilizer away from the embroidered design.



needles

Embroidery needles are generally size 90/14 or 80/12.

- They have an enlarged eye that helps to avoid thread breakage and hold up well to repeated punctures in the fabric without going dull quickly.
- If you are using metallic thread, there are special needles for this purpose. Generally use size 80/12 or 75/11.



stabilizer

Interfacing helps your design come out more clearly, minimizes stretching or buckling, and gives support to delicate fabrics.

- When the back of the design will be visible, use a wash away stabilizer.
- For terry cloth or a high nap fabric, use a topping stabilizer to keep the design from sinking into the fabric.
- For garment embroidery, use a tear away stabilizer on the back to keep the design flat after washing. It may be necessary to add topping stabilizer as well.
- On woven labels, use tear away stabilizer as the back of the label so it will not be seen.
- Test the fabric and stabilizer combination together first. If there is distortion in the design, the fabric may be hooped incorrectly or the stabilizer may be insufficient.



thread

Use high quality, 40 weight thread in polyester or rayon.

- Both polyester and rayon thread will give your design a subtle sheen while providing strength. They are also more colorfast and hold up well to laundering.
- Use the same color and weight of thread in both the bobbin and the needle. If the bobbin thread is showing through on the top of your design, either the tension is off, or the stabilizer is not sufficient.
- If you are using metallic thread, sew at a lower speed to avoid breakage.



additional tips

Keep a record of the settings on your machine that work the best with specific threads, fabrics, and stabilizers so you don't have to figure them out again later on.

Always test stitch your designs before you do the final placement to avoid costly mistakes and additional frustrations!

Have patience and, even more importantly, have fun! Machine embroidery may not be a walk in the park at the beginning, but give it some time and you'll enjoy the process.

