

MONTH ONE – RAW EDGE MACHINE APPLIQUÉ

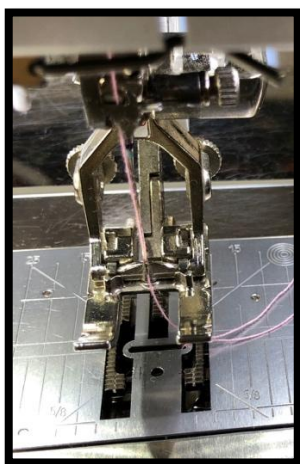
Just a few hints and tips for my preferred method for raw edge machine appliqué

- I like to stabilise my background fabric with fusible swiss cotton (or weave line) ready for the appliqué. It is very fine and is a leave in product and covers the whole of the wrong side of the background fabric block. Yes, it does give your block a bit more body but it does prevent the block from shrinking as you stitch. Having used tear away in the past I am over removing it and I don't want to wash by block so I don't use wash away products. Use what you are happy working with.
- My choice for fusible web is Tilda Fix, Applifix or Heat and Bond instead of Vliesofix as they stay attached to the paper longer. Again, use your preferred product.
- An appliqué mat or baking paper will protect your ironing board and base plate of the iron, against getting glue on it.
- I use a mechanical lead pencil to trace onto the fusible web as it is a nice fine line.
- Cut the shapes out with a short blade, sharp to the tip pair of scissors.
- A Schmetz Microtex 60/8 is my preferred machine needle. It is very fine and can be hard to thread but the smaller the needle the smaller the hole in your fabric. I must admit I piece with this needle as well. Next choice would be a Microtex 70/10, the next size larger.
- Use your open toed embroidery foot for the machine appliqué as it allows you to see where you are stitching
- I like to use blanket stitch for my raw edge machine appliqué and use the factory setting on the machine, a Bernina 710. Width 2.3 and Length 2.6. Play with yours until you have a stitch that looks good and has a good grip on the raw edge of your appliqué pieces. The top tension may need to be adjusted (lowered) when stitching, the bobbin thread should not show on the right/top side. Other stitches to use could be satin stitch, zig zag or blind hem but are not limited to these.
- Use the needle down function on your machine, if you have one, this makes it easy to pivot your work. Some like to use the knee lift on their machine. Some machines have a "hover" function which you might find useful. The foot doesn't go right up but hovers over the fabric.
- I don't use fancy threads for my appliqué because I am usually making a kid's quilt which will be washed and used a lot. I use colour for colour which helps hide any wobbles with the stitching.
- I don't bother with bobbin fill or bottom line, I just use regular 40 weight cotton thread in the bobbin.
- I start and finish my blanket stitch with about 5 or 6 tiny straight stitches (length 0.30) which I run in the ditch along the very edge of the appliqué fabric. Then change to the blanket stitch and move the fabric a smidge to the right to accommodate the width of the blanket stitch. Then change to the straight stitch to finish and move the fabric a smidge to the left to accommodate going back to a straight stitch, so the stitch runs along the edge of the appliqué fabric.

Basics of the fusible web method

Trace the shape onto the paper side of the fusible web (don't forget the underlap if indicated) and cut out with just under a ¼" seam allowance. Mark the name of the shapes (e.g. flower 1 centre medallion) on the paper so you know which ones they are. Fuse the shape to the wrong side of the appliqué fabric, take your time so the glue is well and truly melted, then cut out the shape on the drawn line. Peel the paper from the back of the shape when it has cooled down, place it as required on the right side of the background fabric. Fuse this shape to the right side of the background fabric, overlapping and underlapping if required and stitch in place using your preferred stitch. I like to "build" my appliqué on the ironing board where possible.

Open toed embroidery foot, left. Microtex needles centre. Scissors, short blade, sharp to the tip, right.



A sample of my stitching