

Directions for Appliquéd Sweatshirt / November 2003

(This project utilizes the letter V from our Varsity Monogram Set, and the number 8, created as a companion design for this project. Number 0-9 are available as a separate purchase.)

Step 1. Print the instructions.

These are .pdf files, and require Adobe Acrobat Reader software in order to view and print.

Step 2. Review instructions and materials required (materials list at the end of these instructions).

Step 3. Understanding the design.

The Varsity Monogram Set and the companion number set are digitized with a fill pattern, but they are also digitized to allow an appliqué to be substituted for the fill. This creates an interesting visual alternative, and also save about 75% in sewing time because there are significantly less stitches.

If you look at the design within an embroidery software program, you will see that there are actually four colors:

1. Running stitch outline
2. Light-density zigzag column outline
3. Fill pattern
4. High-density outline column

For an appliqué, it is possible to delete the fill pattern (color 3) and resequence the design within your software, then save the new version of the design under a new filename (you might consider this if you expect to sew many examples of this project). It is just as easy to sew color 1, color 2, then skip over color 3 and finish with color 4 to avoid the fill pattern in favor of an appliqué.

Step 4. Create an appliqué template.

Although there are a few different approaches to creating an appliqué, we find the following method to be simple, easily repeatable, and very accurate:

Hoop a sheet of typing paper, and sew color 1. It is a running stitch that begins at the top of the design, follows the letter outline, then stops following a lock stitch.

Remove this paper sheet from the hoop and write “top” with a pencil at the top of the design, between the running stitch outlines.

Using sharp scissors, carefully trim along the needle perforations, trying to cut just slightly inside the center of each hole. When you are finished you are left with a paper template for the design.

Step 5. Prepare the fabric.

We chose felt for this project. It is readily available, comes in a variety of colors, does not fray on the edges when it is trimmed, and adds a nice “retro” look to this project.

Since our sweatshirt is a darker gray, we chose off-white felt - you may want to pick a different color depending on the sweatshirt color.

Cut a piece of felt, and a slightly smaller piece of “Wonder-Under”, or other heat-fusible pellon. Using a hot iron, fuse the pellon to one side of the felt, paper side up.

When the surface has cooled, use the templates prepared in the previous step. With a pencil, carefully trace the design outline onto the paper surface of the pellon. Using sharp scissors, carefully trim along the pencil lines. Mark “top” again at the top of the design.

Step 6. Embroider the design.

If you have a larger hoop, it will be easier to complete this project if you merge the two designs together within your embroidery software program, then save the combination under a new filename.

If you have a smaller hoop you will still be able to complete this project, but will have to sew each design individually, carefully aligning the two.

Hoop the sweatshirt along with one layer of medium-weight tear-away stabilizer. Owners of commercial machines will have an easier time hooping a small toddler-size sweatshirt, because they will be able to embroider the designs by removing the table on the machine and pass the embroidery arm through the body of the sweatshirt. Home machine users who do not have this capability can still complete the project, but be sure that the two layers of the sweatshirt, front and back, aren't sewn shut. If you cannot hoop the sweatshirt so that the back layer is out of the way, consider Option 2, described below.

Once the sweatshirt is hooped, start the embroidery. The first part of the design is a running stitch outline, then a stop/color change.

After the machine stops, remove the hoop from the machine (DO NOT remove the garment from the hoop!) Remove the paper backing from the previously completed felt design. Use a hot iron or tacking iron to attach the felt character to the sweatshirt, using the running stitch outline as a placement guide. Insure that the felt cutout is evenly heat-bonded to the sweatshirt - this will help keep the finished embroidery from wrinkling after washing.

Put the hoop back on the machine, and sew color 2, which is a light-density column stitch that helps secure the edges of the cutout fabric. There will be another machine stop when this process is completed.

(VERY IMPORTANT!! If you have not altered the design in editing to remove the fill pattern, be sure to skip over color 3 or you will have a fill pattern sewn on top of the appliqué.)

Sew color 4, a high-density column stitch that completes the design.

If you are using a smaller hoop, repeat the steps above for the second design. If you have combined the two designs together in your embroidery software program, don't forget to SKIP THE FILL PATTERN on the second design.

Congratulations! Your project is complete.

OPTION 2:

If you have trouble hooping the sweatshirt, consider doing the project as a double appliqué, sewing each design individually.

Follow the instructions above, but hoop a layer of felt instead of the sweatshirt. You can choose a felt color that is close to the color of the sweatshirt, or one that is contrasting.

Once the design is sewn with appliqué, you can elect to apply another layer of pellon to the back, then trim the design 1/8” in from the edge of the satin stitch border. Now the design can be ironed onto the sweatshirt.

Alternately, sew the design onto the base layer of felt, trim 1/8" outside the embroidered column stitch border, then hand stitch the cut-out design to the sweatshirt.

Sweatshirt

Widely available at department stores, or through catalogues or the Internet.

Felt, Heat Fusible Pellon:

Widely available at fabric stores.