

APPLIQUE - The art of applying fabric cutouts or other materials to a background in order to create a decorative pattern.

This assignment is designed to introduce the basics of only one method of appliqué, hoping to open your creative genius to many other options. The method that will be used is the fused and stitched technique.

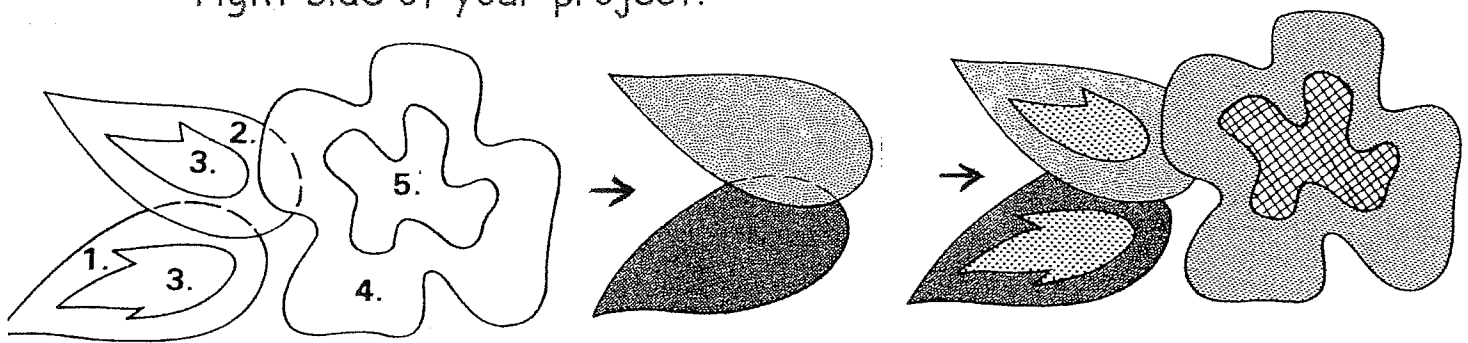
FABRICS - Applique is a wonderful way to use up scraps of fabrics. If the project will need to be washed, consider this when choosing your fabric pieces and trims. Fabrics can add a 3 dimensional effect by adding texture with fabrics like corduroy, satin, and fleece. Even the wrong side of some fabrics can be interesting. Consider stripes, plaids, and prints as well, as long as the size of the print is suitable for the size of the piece and design. If the fabric is light and allows the background or other pieces to show through, a middle layer or interfacing might help solve the problem.

THREADS AND NEEDLES - You might want to consider using rayon thread for shine, or metallic threads that sparkle, but you will then need embroidery or metallic needles in the machine to prevent the thread from fraying with the repeated stitches. Constant but slower speed on the machine will also help the machine feed the thread with less chance of technical difficulties.

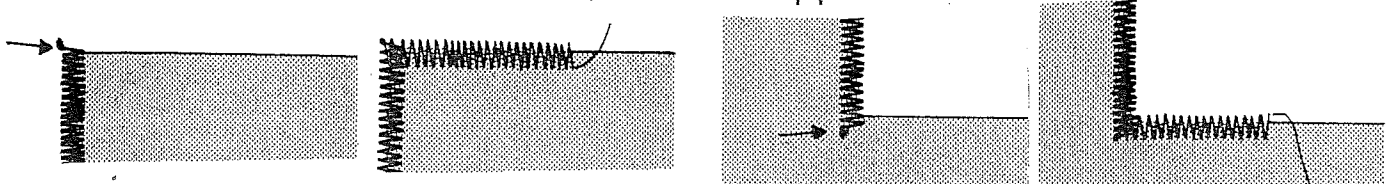
STABILIZERS - It is helpful to support the inside of your appliqué while sewing with either interfacing or stabilizers. If your design will need the support after stitching, consider an interfacing suitable for that fabric that can remain inside the garment, and trim close to the stitches after sewing the design. Stabilizers are fusible or non-fusible, tear away, melt away, rinse away, or permanent, and some come in black as well as white. Place the stabilizer on the wrong side of your main fabric before beginning your stitching. If your fabric is heavier (e.g. denim), you may not need them to keep the stitches flat. When in doubt, try a small sample of your fabric and stitches first.

FUSING - The easiest way to get your design to behave, regardless of your design fabrics, is to fuse the pieces to your background before stitching them on. Using paper backed fusible web makes the job foolproof. Draw each part of the design on to the paper side of the web. Remember that the design will be fused on to the wrong side of the design fabrics, so letters will reverse, as will the direction of your pieces. You also need to think about the direction of prints, textures of fabrics like corduroy, etc., before fusing. Fuse the fusing on to chunks of your fabrics, without worrying about cutting on the exact lines until after they are fused together. Then cut them out, with the paper still on the back. Follow the manufacturer's directions regarding the fusing

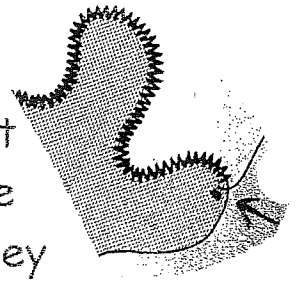
temperature and time. It is usually a dry iron. Use a press cloth if you are concerned about your fabric melting. Plan the placement of your design before the second fuse on to the article. Do you want it centered, or off to one side? Peel off the paper, and assemble your artwork layering from back to front, with the fusing facing the right side of your project.



STITCHING - It is best to stitch with a zig zag foot on your machine, as the groove under the foot gives more space for the "satin stitch" density. You may need to lessen the needle tension to get a good stitch balance. It is acceptable for the top thread to pull to the underside of your stitching, but you should not see the bobbin thread on the top of the design. Use a close zig zag, but not close enough to pile up. The width of the stitch should be wider for larger pieces, and narrower for smaller ones. If sewing leather or suede, do not use a zig zag or a short stitch, as the hide will perforate and fall apart. The stitch should be 99% on the design, and just zag off the edge into the background layer, to keep the edge from fraying and outline the design at the same time. When sewing outside corners and curves, pivot with the needle on the outside, and the opposite for inside



corners and curves. Try to keep the stitches at right angles to the cut edge of the design at all times. The ends of the stitches do not need to be secured if they will be sewn over by another row, but if not you should tie off or change to zero length and sew in one spot to tie the thread. The order of stitching should work from the back of your design forward. Then add any other design lines as desired, and remove stabilizers if not using permanent methods. Add buttons, hand stitching, etc., and admire your artwork!



Order of work:

1. Trace parts separately onto paper side of web. Cut roughly apart.
2. Fuse sections onto wrong side of separate fabrics and then cut on outside lines.
3. Check design placement, remove paper, and fuse pieces onto main project.
4. Add stabilizer or interfacing to wrong side of project by pressing (fusible) or pinning.
5. Stitch pieces, starting from the back pieces of the design and working forward, securing thread ends.
6. Remove stabilizer if it is temporary.
6. Add design details with stitching, fabric paint or felt pens, buttons, or embroidery.