

## Machine Embroidery Techniques

# Basic Applique

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*SewBlest*



Applique is the technique of applying decorative fabric shapes on top of a base fabric and finishing the edges by hand or machine. What once took days to complete now takes just minutes with machine embroidery.

### Preparations

Start by pressing base fabric and applique fabrics. If you are going to use fusible web to secure the applique, apply it to the back of the applique pieces before stitching.

**TIP:** Fabric scraps are ideal for machine applique. Keep them in a box or basket and separate by color.

Design is from the Applique Quilting Hearts Collection by [Amazing Designs](#).

I used an adhesive tear-away in the hoop, 50-weight cotton thread on top, and regular bobbin thread.

### Introduction

Most embroidery designs contain placement stitches, tack-down stitches, other design embellishments, and a final satin stitch or blanket stitch to finish applique edges.

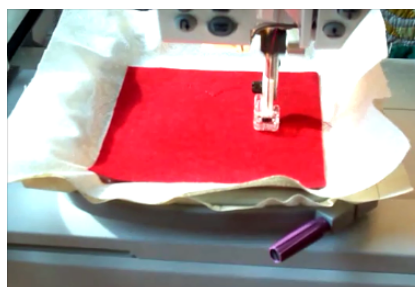


### Placement Stitch

Typically, the first applique stitch is a placement stitch to show the size and location of the applique.

**TIP:** Many thread sequences show placement stitches and tack-down stitches as different colors. That creates color stops between steps. Because they will not show, you can avoid extra thread changes by using the same thread color for placement and tack-down stitches as the first color in the embroidery sequence.

Spray the back of the applique piece with a temporary adhesive. Finger-press it over the placement stitches.



**TIP:** Never spray adhesive in the hoop! Spray the back of the applique fabric away from your machine (in a shallow box or on a sheet of paper), then finger-press it in place. Some embroiderers also use school-grade or fabric glue sticks to temporarily hold applique pieces in place.

### Tack-Down Stitch

After the applique fabric is in place, the next stitch sequence is a tack-down stitch. This secures the applique fabric to the base fabric by putting down a line of running stitches inside the placement stitches.



### Trim

Remove the hoop from your machine but leave everything in the hoop. Working on a flat surface (don't stretch the hooped fabric), carefully trim around the tack-down stitches.

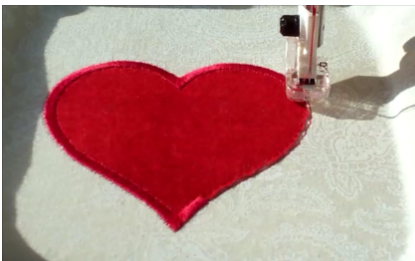
Applique scissors are made specifically for this task. They have a wedge-shaped blade that allows

you to cut very close to stitches without clipping them.

**TIP:** *If your cut-away edges don't look pretty, don't worry. As long as the fabric lies inside the placement stitches and edges are secured by tack-down stitches, the finishing satin stitches will cover the edges.*

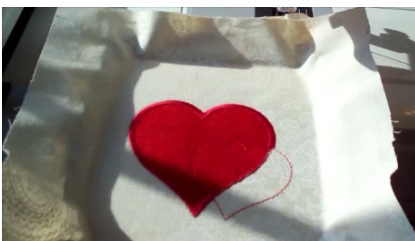
### Additional Placements/Tack-Downs

The first satin stitch stops to allow placement of the second applique.

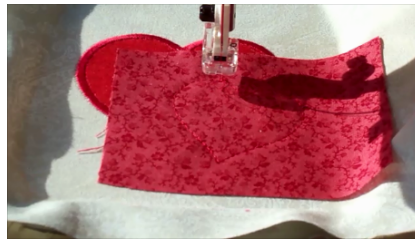


Stitch the second placement stitch.

**TIP:** *Be sure to check the stitch sequence diagram. Depending on the design, other embroidery or embellishments may be stitched between applique sequences.*



Spray the back of the second applique fabric with temporary adhesive and finger-press it in place over the placement stitches. Stitch the tack-down stitch for the second applique.



Remove the hoop and trim close to the tack-down stitches.



Return the hoop to the machine and stitch the final satin stitches.



When all placement, tack-down, satin, and additional embellishment stitches are complete, remove the applique from the hoop and gently tear the stabilizer from the back.



Press, and it's ready for inclusion in your project!