

# In-the-hoop Luggage Tags

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Luggage tags are very quick to make in the embroidery hoop. They can be stitched with very bright fabrics so that you can easily see your bags on the conveyor at the airport. Cable ties are very inexpensive and will fasten your tag securely. It can only be removed by cutting, so won't fall off in transit. I bought a package of 650 tags for about \$6.00 at a discount store. I found them in the hardware department, so you can check your hardware store, too.

Some safety experts recommend adding only initials or a first name, rather than a complete name and address. This prevents baggage handlers from seeing exactly where there is no one home. The baggage claim ticket has a bar code which identifies your bag completely, so your bag can be returned if lost. You need not make that information available for casual observers.

The oblong and square tags have three colors in the design: two for running stitches and one for a satin stitch border and buttonhole. When you create your embroidery design, add the lettering first and then the luggage tag. You can then choose which method of construction you prefer to use. In the first, the fabric is trimmed away after the tag is completely stitched. In the second, the fabric is trimmed before doing the satin stitch border. Although this second method takes a little longer, some prefer its more finished look.

To determine the amount of fabric to use for either construction method, measure the area inside your inner hoop. The area inside my 150 x 150 mm hoop is 6 3/4" x 7 5/8". I can fit two oblong luggage tags in this hoop. If I want to use the same fabric for both tags, I use 6 3/4" x 7 5/8" as my measurement. If I want to use a different fabric for each tag, I measure the hoop area for each half of the hoop space. (Please note that the center of the stitching area is farther down than the center of the hoop.) Use the marks on the sides of the hoop for measuring each half-hoop. For my round 100 x 100 mm spring hoop I decided on 5" x 5 1/2". Each dimension is at least 1" bigger than the square tag. I chose to use a rectangle rather than a square so that I can position the fabric in the direction I intend. A square looks the same no matter how you turn it.

## Materials:

1. Cotton fabric.
2. Fusible interfacing.
3. Tearaway embroidery stabilizer.
4. Embroidery thread.
5. Bobbin thread for embroidery.
6. Embroidery or regular sewing thread in bobbin, to match top embroidery thread.
7. Temporary basting spray.
8. Fray preventer (such as Fray Block or Fray Check).
9. Embroidery design to fit desired luggage tag.
10. Either luggage\_tag\_square or luggage\_tag\_oblong embroidery design.
11. Cable tie, shower curtain ring, or other fastener for attaching your luggage tag to your bag.

## Method One:

1. Combine lettering with tag design as desired. If you will use the same fabric for two tags, you can combine both tags into one design in software.
2. Cut two rectangles of fabric to the dimensions determined above. Notice that I chose to cut one rectangle with horizontal stripes and one with vertical. You may choose whatever pleases you.

3. Cut two rectangles of fusible interfacing, sized 1/8" less in each dimension than the fabric pieces.

4. Fuse interfacing to the wrong side of each piece of fabric, according to package directions.

5. Spray the back of one piece of fabric with temporary basting spray. Center the fabric on hooped stabilizer.

6. If you have a fix-baste feature, use that to stitch around the area needed for the tag(s). You may be able to select basting the hoop area rather than the design area. If so, your basting will be less in the way of the satin stitching to come.



7. Embroider the text for your tag(s) and the first tag outline. Cut the bobbin thread and remove the hoop from your embroidery machine.

8. Trim away any jump threads on the wrong side of the stabilizer.

9. Spray the back of the second piece of fabric with temporary basting spray. Center the fabric on the wrong side of the stabilizer.



10. Repeat the fix-baste to hold the bottom fabric in place. You may need to leave stitch-out mode and then return again in order to access the fix-baste option. As long as you don't move the design while doing so, everything will line up properly.

11. Stitch the second tag outline and the satin border.

12. Remove the hoop from the machine. Cut out each tag, leaving fabric all around. Paint the outside of the satin border and the inside of the buttonhole with fray preventer. Let dry or press with iron. Separate layers of fabric and pull away stabilizer. Trim fabric close to stitching. Open buttonhole with chisel.



## Method Two:

1. Combine lettering with tag design as desired.

2. Cut two rectangles of fabric to the dimensions determined above.

3. Cut two rectangles of fusible interfacing, sized 1/8" less in each dimension than the fabric pieces.

4. Fuse interfacing to the wrong side of each piece of fabric, according to package directions.

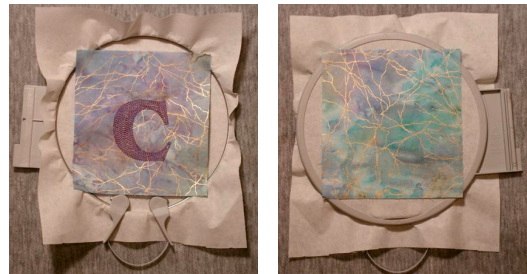
5. Spray the back of one piece of fabric with temporary basting spray. Center the fabric on hooped stabilizer.



6. Embroider the text for your tag. Cut bobbin thread and remove the hoop from your machine.

7. Trim away any jump threads on the wrong side of the stabilizer.

8. Spray the back of the second piece of fabric with temporary basting spray. Center the fabric on the wrong side of the stabilizer.



9. Stitch the first tag outline. Cut bobbin thread and remove the hoop from your machine.

10. Carefully trim the fabric close to the stitching on both sides of the stabilizer.

11. Stitch the second tag outline and the satin border.

12. Remove the hoop from the machine. Paint the inside of the buttonhole with fray preventer. Let dry or press with iron. Gently remove the tag from the stabilizer. Trim any stabilizer whiskers. Open buttonhole with chisel.

