

WHITE

APPLIQUÉ SPORTS TOWELS



There are as many ways to appliqué as there are fabrics to use to use to do it! For these fun, summer towels a satin stitch appliqué technique is used. With a little practice and some careful preparation you can create some wonderful gifts for family and friends or even for yourself!

BEFORE YOU SEW:

Preshrink the applique fabrics.

1. **THREAD**—Top threads: To make the design really shine, rayon embroidery thread was used on the towels. A contrasting color was used for highlights and to make the design stand out. A matching or slightly darker color can be used to make the stitching blend into the design or background. Bobbin: Select a polyester sewing thread that blends into the fabric for the bobbin thread.
2. **NEEDLES**—A Universal needle, size #80/12, was used on all the towels. The beach towel is heavy velour and a size #90 needle is another option.
3. **SEWING MACHINE SET-UP**—
 - Clean and oil your machine.
 - Insert a new needle.
 - You may need to slightly loosen the upper thread tension so the top thread is pulled to the back of the towel and the bobbin thread will not show on the top.
 - Adjust your zigzag stitch. Stitch length—1 to 1/2. This will depend on the thread and the fabric. Test to find the length that is short enough to truly color or be “satin” and long enough to feed smoothly through the machine. Stitch width—can vary from 1 1/2 to 2 depending on the size, shape, and scale of the design and whether the appliqué stitch will blend or be a contrast. However, the narrower the stitch width used, the easier it is to maneuver around corners, curves and angles. Try to be consistent with the width within the same design. This is where practice comes in.
 - Use an appliqué or embroidery presser foot that gives you more visibility and will glide over the compact satin stitches.
 - Other helpful adjustments—If your machine has capacity to make the following adjustments it may make your sewing easier. Machine speed—a lower speed will give a feeling of more control; Needle down—the machine will stop with the needle in the fabric so everything stays in place.

4. APPLIQUÉ DESIGN CREATION—Print off the patterns on your computer. Your fabric will be easier to cut, shape and stitch if it is backed with a lightweight fusible interfacing. You can also use spray starch to add body. If the fabric is light in color or lightweight, fuse two layers together with a fusible web and then interface. This will prevent the background color or pattern from showing through, prevent distortion of the appliqué color and allow you to use fabrics that would otherwise be too lightweight.

Trace and cut out the entire design before doing any stitching. It will help you plan placement, select colors and make any desired changes. Trace the desired part of your appliqué onto paper-backed fusible web large enough so there is at least a 1/2" to 1" margin around the entire design. Fuse the paper-backed fusible web to the interfaced side of the fabric. Cut out around the traced design. Repeat with the rest of the design pieces. Remove the paper backing to fuse the design to the towel. (NOTE: Some-times it is difficult to remove the paper, rather than start from the edge of the design use a straight pin to score the paper in the center of the design and tear it away from the center.)

Spray a piece of tear-away type stabilizer with spray adhesive and position on the back of the towel. Place under the presser foot And GO FOR IT!

GOLF TOWEL



When creating depth or distance in a scene, your appliqué design pieces are sewn on top of each other. As towels can be thick or bulky, do some layering of pieces before they are fused to a towel. In this case, fuse and stitch the “hole” on to the “green” before fusing it to the towel. Turning the “green” slowly, almost stitch-by-stitch is less challenging than having to turn the larger towel while sewing around the small piece.

When creating the pole for the flag and the line of the “bounce”, stitch the satin-stitch over a cord so the stitching stands away from the towel. For the pole, the stitching was done over a satin rattail cord and for the bounce we used two strands of gimp cord or pearl cotton.



TENNIS TOWEL



The tennis ball section of this design was cut from a lightweight yellow facecloth! It added just the right amount of texture to the design. Prepare the fabric using interfacing and the paper-backed fusible web in the same manner as outlined above. Using dark gray thread, straight stitch the curved lines on the ball, going

over them twice if necessary. Then, fuse the tennis ball to the towel. If the loops of the facecloth fabric get caught in the toes of your presser foot, it may be necessary to place a layer of water-soluble stabilizer on top of the ball while stitching it to the towel. The stabilizer will easily tear away once the stitching is completed.

Use a separate piece of white tone-on-tone colored fabric for the net section of the tennis racket. Interface the fabric, cutting it an inch larger than you need on all sides. Using a dark grey thread, a straight stitch or triple straight stitch and length of 4 to 5 mm, stitch a grid with lines one presser foot distance apart. Trace an oval shape on the paper-backed fusible web, fuse to the fabric and cut out. Fuse this piece to the towel first and frame it with the racket piece

The handle of the tennis racket is made from faux suede. Rather than using a satin stitch, the handle is held in place with rows of straight stitching, length 3 mm, sewn at an angle so it appears the stitching goes around the handle.





This may sound more difficult that it is. The trick is to sew fast!