

Supplies

- o Man's Shirt
- o Embroidery Design
- o Palette Software and Printer to Print Designs
- o Embroidery Thread and Embroidery Bobbin
- o Embroidery Threads
- o Floriani Fusible Power Mesh Stabilizer
- o Magnetic Hoop for Baby Lock Array (ENMF180S)

Instructions

Plan the Project

Embroidery on a button down shirt can be an easy project. The fabric is usually a sturdy fabric and access to the sides and back for hooping is straightforward. Increase the challenge with embroidery on harder to reach areas. Hoop the collars, cuffs, shoulders and sleeves with specialty hoops or by floating on a sticky stabilizer. It is an excellent opportunity to combine designs with different themes and sizes for a custom look. When combining designs from different collections, select a common color palette for all the various embroideries to create cohesion in the overall look. Use the color change feature in the machine or in software to assign the colors to the designs.

When considering designs, keep in mind the size of the design and the density of the stitches. More stitches make the fabric stiff and can make the garment uncomfortable if placed in an area that routinely flexes or bends. Larger and denser designs are best placed on the upper back, left or right upper chest or along the left or right button band. Decrease the design density in software or if your machine has this feature. Be aware that some

embroidery designs with special stitches do not re-size well. Designs with candlewick, chain and other types of stitching that mimic handwork are specially digitized (hand punched) and will not scale well.

If this garment is for a specific person, then that special someone will be the beginning of this adventure. Is the garment for a special event or activity? Does the wearer want to highlight a hobby or promote an interest? Is the recipient interested in all-over, “in your face” embroidery or a more subtle “suggestion” of the theme? Are you creating for a person with definite rules about what they will and will not wear? Sometimes surprises are not the best plan for a project such as this. Talk with the person and show them ideas before planning the project. If possible, print out the full size designs using software and place them on the shirt before embroidery. The recipient will get a good idea of the finished project before stitches are placed on fabric. Jot down feedback on the printouts. This also a good time to interact and inform the recipient what is and is not possible with your machines capabilities and personal skill set. After the planning phase, give a reasonable timeline for completing the project. Great art seldom happens overnight and non-embroiderers will not know that these things take time.

Inspiration is everywhere. Search for “man’s embroidered shirt images” and specific garments will show not only vintage items, but contemporary pieces as well. Looking for “over the top” vintage inspiration? Search for Nudie Cohn (Nuta Kotlyarenko) a Ukrainian immigrant who designed elaborate outfits for some of the most famous celebrities of his era. His client list reads as a who’s who of the music industry in the 60s, 70s and 80s.

Embroidery

Match the stabilizer to the size of the design and the fabric of the shirt. Use a resource for stabilizer, design and fabric pairing such as stabilizer company website and package information. Larger designs require a cutaway stabilizer to support the embroidery. Since cutaway stabilizer remains in the fabric and can abrade the skin, choose one with a soft hand such as Floriani Fusible Power Mesh.

Place the design and mark the garment carefully using a removable marker. Choose a hoop that is small enough to hoop any difficult parts of the garment, such as the shoulder area and large enough to allow moving the design into position within the hoop. Hoop using the marks as a guide and any design placement features of your machine. Using a printout of the design in actual size will help in placement and rotation.