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Knits have become the staples of our day to day wardrobes because they are so soft and stretchy. Here are some techniques to keep the soft and the stretchy nature of the knit while adding beautiful embroidery to the garment or yardage.

## Supplies

Knit Garment or Knit Yardage

Embroidery Threads and Embroidery Bobbin Thread

Wash Away Thread

Stabilizer (see **Bold** type below for stabilizer suggestions)

Stretch or Ballpoint Machine needles depending on the type of knit

## Instructions

### *Choose a Knit and a Design*

There are so very, very many different types of knits. Consider the amount of stretch, the direction of the stretch, the fiber content and the texture when planning your embroidery. Dense designs with many stitches are generally not suitable for embroidery on knits because they stiffen the fabric and do not allow for stretch. Before you fall in love with a design, consider a design with fewer stitches and avoid large areas with solid fill patterns. Multiple needle strikes in an area will also cause the knit fibers to tear and leave a hole. Embroidery software can be very helpful in modifying a design for use on knits. The density of a design can be manually reduced or use a feature of the software that automatically manipulates the design following a recipe. In any case, try to test sew the design on a similar fabric if possible.

### *Stabilizer, So Many Choices*

Choose a stabilizer that will support the design, but doesn't change the feel of the fabric after the embroidery is complete.

- *Cut Away Stabilizer* – will remain on the back of the embroidered fabric for the life of the garment and will continue to support the embroidery washing after washing. Most often used on knit fabrics are No Show Mesh stabilizers. This type of stabilizer is soft and sheer enough to not show through when used on light fabrics. After embroidery, remove the excess stabilizer leaving a margin around the design. One layer of **Floriani No Show Mesh Fusible** is recommended for a design of average stitch count (6,000-8,000 stitches in a 4" by 4" design). If the design is denser, consider a different design or add an additional layer of tearaway stabilizer.
- *Tear Away Stabilizer* – can be used in addition to No Show Mesh for designs with a high stitch count. Use a piece of **Floriani Medium Tearaway** between the hoop and the bed of the machine. Tear away the stabilizer after the embroidery is complete.
- *Water Soluble Stabilizer* – is a very good choice for knits because it will be completely removed after the embroidery is finished and can be used as a topping to keep the thread from burying into the fabric. **Floriani Wet N Gone** is also available as **Wet N Gone Fusible** and **Wet N Gone Tacky**. Wash away stabilizer is gently removed with a thorough rinse and will not damage delicate knits as when removing as a tearaway might.
- *Water Soluble Topping* – is an important addition to knit embroidery, especially on textured knits. Wet N Gone or **Floriani Water Soluble Topping** provides a smooth surface for the embroidery foot to glide over provides additional stability and keeps the stitches elevated. The Water Soluble Topping is clear and ideal for use when embroidery placement is essential.

### *Special Techniques for Hooping and Stitching*

Some knits will distort when hooped in a traditional manner squeezed in between the two hoop rings. "Hoop Burn" is a distortion of the fabric caused by hooping. The garment or fabric can be floated above the stabilizer that has been hooped. A tacky stabilizer hooped with the tacky side up will allow the item to be pressed onto the surface. Add a basting stitch with **Wash Away Thread** around the design to hold the item (especially large items) and topping in place. If your machine doesn't have a built in basting stitch, use the frame feature to add a single stitch box around the design and stitch it with Wash Away Thread.

When choosing a needle for your project a standard machine **Embroidery** type needle will usually work well, but some knits may snag, run or even skip stitches with the standard

needle. Try a Universal type needle that has a slightly rounded point if the Embroidery needle is cutting the fibers. Use a Ballpoint type needle for heavier looser knits and a Stretch type needle for highly elastic fabrics like Spandex or Lycra.

### *Design Database Transfer*

To find the free Baby Lock downloadable software to transfer designs from the computer to the Vesta or any other Wi-Fi enabled Baby Lock Machine:

- Altair
- Flare
- Meridian
- Solaris 2
- Vesta
- Array
- Venture

Go to the following website:

<https://babylock.com/accessories/software/design-database-transfer>

At the website page, click on “Read More” and scroll down to:

Download the software [here](#).

Click [here](#) and the software should automatically download. Install the software by locating the Download folder and clicking on the “ddt100\_tac.exe” file.

Websites can change. These directions are correct as of November 10, 2021.