Embroidery on ribbons, quilt or garment borders and anything that exceeds the maximum size of the hoop expands the creativity of the projects you can accomplish with your machine. This handout explores some of the options available on the Brother Stellaire and similar machines.

Determine the Length of the Finished Embroidery

Embroidery larger than the maximum hoop size will be stitched with multiple hooping. Select designs for the embroidery and use the resizing feature of the machine to modify the designs to fit. When using text, evaluate the text for suitability such as the size range available for that font. Experiment with parts of the text to evaluate if parts that extend above the central part of the text will fit into the space. Use spellcheck and double check to make sure the text doesn't contain errors.

Evaluate the completed design and determine the breaks necessary to stitch parts that will fit into the maximum size hoop. Try to "break" the complete design into logical parts. For example, when dividing text try to keep whole words together if possible. Choose parts that fit comfortably within the hoop to allow for easy placement by moving the design within the hoop. Save each segment of the design into the memory of the machine and an additional location such as a USB device. If the project must be stored, keep the USB attached to the project. If necessary keep notes on the order of saved embroideries.

Prepare the Fabric

If possible, embroider on fabric before it has been cut to size. Quilt borders are a good example of an item that can be pre-embroidered before cutting. If a design will overlap any seam, naturally the piece must be embroidered after the seam is sewn. After embroidery, center the embroidery and cut to size or shape. Some projects, such as embroidery on

ribbon will need to be hooped using special techniques to hold the item in the hoop. Stabilize the fabric or ribbon according to the stitch count and final use of the design. A tearaway stabilizer works well for quilts. Knit fabrics will need a cutaway stabilizer. If the embroidery will be seen from the wrong side such as on a ribbon, choose a wash away stabilizer.

After the fabric is stabilized, mark any lines needed for placement. At least one easily seen mark that determines the complete placement such as a center or bottom line should extend the entire length of the fabric. Mark segments on the through line. Note that when placing text that the space between words and letters must be noted. Use as many built in placement features of the machine to place subsequent embroideries before embroidery. It's a good idea to place an embroidery and then work through a check list before beginning.
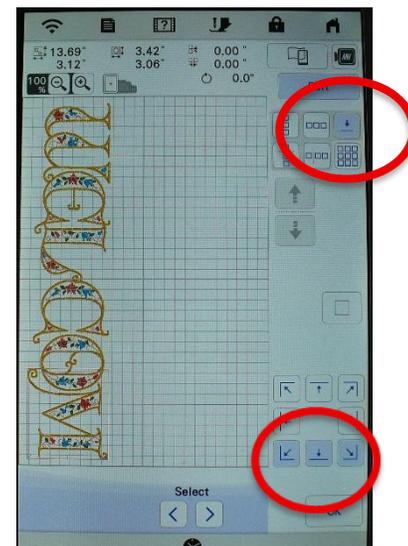
Some Tips for Connecting Designs

When creating the design use the grid feature to line up designs. Engage the grid feature in Settings. Both a 1" and 3/8" grid are available.

Add additional text or design segments in Embroidery Edit by keeping some of the previous segment. Save the first segment into the memory of the machine and onto a USB. Modify this by removing all but the last design. In the photo right, the "M" from the previous segment was saved and used to verify the size and position of the final letter "E". Use the move arrows (not by using a stylus or your finger) to move that design directly to the top of the screen. Using the Add icon, select the next letter or design. Use the placement, size and orientation of the previous design to place, size and orientate the next segment. The element from the previous segment can be deleted before saving or, if it is small enough, saved and used to help place using the My Design Snap app. Re-hoop, send a picture of the hoop to the screen of the machine. Place the image of the last design directly on top of the stitched one. Advance the design past the previously stitched one or return to Embroidery Edit and delete it.

Use the Border feature of the machine to add match points. Open the border feature and add placement arrows to any parts of the design that should connect to another. In Embroidery Edit, select the border feature icon and then the Line and Arrow icon. Select the matching points on any given segment of the design. Use the arrows to toggle between parts of the design such as individual letters.
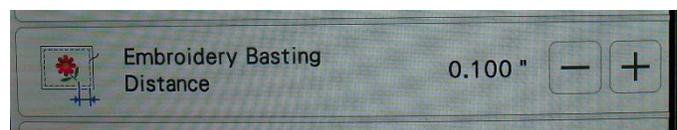
The Stellaire features two-point positioning. This feature is most successful when using the placement arrows generated with the Border feature as described above. After re-hooping use this feature to position and rotate the next segment.

Some machines, such as the top-of-the-line Brother Aveneer have an auto connect feature that uses placement stickers to position designs by rotating and allowing the sewist to visually see the distance between letters.

After re-hooping for the next design, use the My Design Snap feature to see the previous segment. Use your mobile device to take a picture of the hooped fabric and send the picture to the screen of the machine. When taking a photo with the app, the black and white icons on the inner ring of the hoop cannot be covered. Fold any fabric that extends beyond the hoop before snapping a picture with the app.

Use sticky stabilizer and a window to place the fabric. Hoop sticky stabilizer with the sticky (paper) side up. Do not remove the paper. In the Embroidery screen, select the Basting icon. The basting should be slightly larger than the design. If not, increase the size of the basting window in settings. In settings, turn off the Upper and Bobbin Thread Sensor. Without thread in the needle, "stitch" the basting box on the stabilizer through the paper and the stabilizer. Remove the hoop from the machine and lay on hard surface.

Using the point of scissors, gently score the paper along the needle holes. Pull the paper away from the basting box area. Use the edges of the basting box to help place the fabric. If necessary, mark extra lines on the paper to place the fabric over the box. In settings, turn

Upper and Bobbin Thread Sensor feature back on. Use the +/- key on the bottom of the screen to return to the basting box, thread the machine and baste the fabric down to secure it.