

Stitching Together

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Lesson Four - Hand Applique

Choosing your Thread

For invisible appliqué stitches use a fine thread that matches the color of the fabric you are sewing to the quilt top. If it is multicolored, gray works nicely.

My favorite is brand DecoBob made by Wonderfil. It is a 'cottonized' soft polyester which has been treated to behave more like cotton and eliminate stretch. Because it is lightweight (80wt) it reduces bulk in the fabric. If using 100% cotton thread, use a thread conditioner such as Bees Wax or Thread Heaven to avoid tangling.

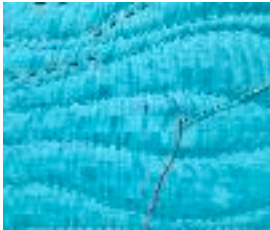
Needles

Milliners (also know as Straw needles) are a great choice for hand appliqué. These needles have very sharp points and do not get wider where the 'eye' is located. This is important for piercing the fabric instead of relying on sewing through the weave of the warp and weft. Size 9 or 10 recommended.

General Instructions for Hand Applique

1. Cut thread for hand sewing at 18". Longer lengths puts extra wear on your thread while sewing. Also, as you sew, continue to move thread through the eye of needle to avoid breakage.

2. Begin by taking a stitch leaving the knot visible on top. It's position is planned to be underneath the appliqué shape. Place appliqué shape on knot. Take a small stitch along edge of appliqué. Go directly back down into the quilt top and travel forward. The thread is between the quilt top and backing.



3. Bring needle back up and take another small stitch along edge then back down into the quilt top. Continue process until edges are all sewn down.



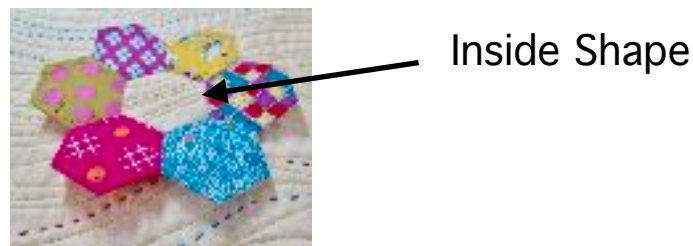
Sewing EPP to Quilted Top

When appliquéing EPP to Quilted top, only stitch through edge of the EPP, quilt top and batting. Stitches do not need to go through the backing.

1. Lay your EPP on quilted top. The papers are still in, keeping the crisp edges and corners in tack. Attached by placing pins in the seams between the papers.



2. Thread and knot one end of thread. Plan to have the knot be placed between the EPP and quilt top. Sew the inside shape first. Be careful not to sew through the papers.

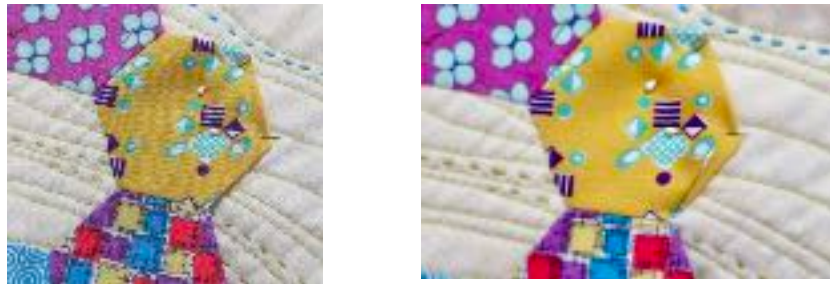


3. Cut off one of the basting knots. Remove basting stitches with a stiletto on one shape and remove paper.



Basting knot

4. Start your hand appliqué at the seam between two of your shapes. Bury the knot under the EPP.



5. Sew outside edge of first shape. No need to cut the thread between shapes. Remove the next paper. Continue this process until all papers are removed and edges are stitched down.

