

14 Steps to Great Embroidered Quilt Labels

You will need:

Fabric for your label	Pellon SF101 or 950F Interfacing
Terial Magic or Sta-Flo	Floriani's No Show Mesh
Sulky's Totally Stable or Stiffy OR Floriani's Medium Cutaway	Sulky's Solvy
75/11 or 80/12 machine embroidery needle	Sulky spray baste or 505 spray baste
Medium hoop (mine is 100x130mm or 5x7in)	Bottom Line 760 wt thread
	Embroidery Scissors

14 Steps

1. Launder fabric you will be using for your label as you would the quilt it's going on.
2. Spray heavily with Terial Magic or undiluted Sta-Flo starch. Let that sit on the fabric until almost dry and then press with iron. Glide your iron as little as possible to prevent distorting.
3. Fuse wrong side of fabric with interfacing like you would a garment. The two I find worked best are ShirTailor (950F) or Shape-Flex (SF101). DO NOT use any of the stretch type of interfacings intended for knit fabrics. You will get puckering between lines of stitching.
4. Spray baste 2 layers of Floriani's No-Show Mesh to the backside. (It will be touching your interfacing) or use one layer of Solvy's Stiffy or Totally Stable if you prefer that brand.
5. Cut a piece of water soluble stabilizer such as Sulky's Solvy approximately the same size as your fabric or just large enough to fit on the inside of your hoop and place it on the right side of your fabric.
6. Put this label sandwich in your machine's hoop carefully placing your fabric so that your label will be centered.
7. Fill your bobbin with 60 weight thread such as Superior Thread's Bottom Line and thread your machine with the same. Comes in 55 colors and is carried locally by Bernina Connection, 35th Ave, and Mulqueen's.
8. Install a new 75/11 or 80/12 topstitch or embroidery needle in your machine.
9. You are ready to begin stitching your label. Begin with the perimeter straight stitch box as that will hold the Solvy in place.
10. Once stitched, remove from the hoop and trim your label from the larger piece of fabric leaving yourself at least an inch around all sides of the stitching.
11. Use embroidery scissors or duck bill scissors to trim all your connecting stitches top before removing stabilizers. It's easier to trim at this stage.
12. Either rinse out the stabilizers in a sink or put the label in a lingerie bag and toss in the washing machine. Once dry, you will need to press starting with the backside and use a pressing cloth or Teflon pressing sheet so you don't melt the threads or damage the sheen of the threads.
13. After you press, cut away the Stiffy or Totally Stable if you used that. If you use the No-Show Mesh, just cut away just one layer and leave the other layer.
14. You're now ready to turn under the edges and hand-sew into your quilt.

TIPS:

-Choose a relatively plain, open font style for less puckering

-When designing your label on your machine, be you sure to give yourself enough space between the lines. The closer each line is to the one above or below it, the greater likelihood for puckering.

-Be sure to stitch your label first line 1st, followed by second line 2nd and so forth. If you skip around, you are likely to experience more puckering when removed from the hoop.

-Don't skip stitching the straight line box around the perimeter of your design. This helps keep your stabilizer topping in place and reduces puckering between lines of stitching.

-I think Terial Magic reduces the puckering better than Sta-Flo but it is much more expensive. Sta-Flo is a good second choice.

-I usually prefer Pellon Shape-Flex SF101 as an interfacing but in this application, I think ShirTailor works slightly better.

-To save time, I like to prepare a quarter yard or larger of a white or off-white fabric to become labels. You can complete the starching and interfacing steps and then stitch labels from that piece as you need. This allows you to place the labels a little closer together thus saving on materials. Another added benefit to this is that many of the stabilizer rolls come in the same width as a quarter yard of fabric which allows you to reduce the waste. Stabilizers are expensive so save where you can!

-As an alternative to using 60 wt Bottom Line, you can try using a 50 wt like Superior's So Fine or Isacord's embroidery thread which is 40 wt but reduce your needle tension to 2.0 and decrease the stitch density to 95% if your machine has that adjustment. This may take some experimenting to achieve results with which you're satisfied.

-If you are stitching a very dense motif along with your lettering and need more stabilization, use Sulky's Totally Stable instead of the lighter weight options and use a 80/12 needle.

-If it works with your quilt, think about using a batik for your label. Since the weave is tighter than a typical quilting cotton, I think batiks make better labels.

-Sulky.com has a very useful stabilizer selection tool on their website under the "Resources" tab.