

How To Appliqué (Tutorial on Appliquéing)

COPYRIGHT © ROSE RUSHBROOKE
WWW.ROSERUSHBROOKE.COM
ROSE@ROSERUSHBROOKE.COM
813 335 1634

Here is how you can appliqué a Sunbonnet Sue block using the needle turn freezer paper method.

Step 1



Make sure that you have reversed the pattern using a light box or window. You don't want that nasty sinking feeling when you realise that the picture is backwards! Iron your freezer paper templates onto the wrong side of the fabric. I have found that pressing the iron down for 10 seconds at the highest heat ensures that the freezer paper sticks to the fabric.

Cut out each piece allowing for about one eighth of an inch seam allowance around the edge of the template. In the case of fabric that frays easily it would be a good idea to give yourself a slightly bigger allowance. Clip

curves. The freezer paper will be staying on the piece while you stitch it down.

Step 2



Place your drawing over the foundation fabric matching up any register marks you have made. In this case I have cut clear plastic to the exact size of the finished pillow and have made pencil marks around each corner on the background fabric.

While keeping one hand holding down the drawing, gently lift up the clear plastic and place the piece of appliqué underneath so that it lines up with the drawing. Here you can see that I have already stitched some pieces onto the foundation fabric.

Step 3



Here is a close up of the top part of Sunbonnet Sue's red hat laid underneath the clear plastic drawing. See how it lines up with the marking pen. don't forget that there is an eighth of an inch seam allowance around the template so make sure you accommodate this when lining up each piece.

I buy this clear plastic from Jo-Anns. It comes in a roll and you can buy as many yards as you wish. Sharpie pens stick to the surface but I have noticed that with much use the lines do smudge and wear away so keep an eye on it. All you need to do is touch up the drawing occasionally.

Step 4



Pin the piece onto the foundation fabric every half inch or so with glass head [applique pins](#). I prefer these tiny pins as the thread does not catch so badly when stitching. If you want to be thorough you can baste instead of pinning. However life is too short and I have found that distortion is minimal if the pins are inserted carefully where the fabric extends beyond the freezer paper.

You can also use brass sequin pins which are only half an inch long.

Step 5



Thread a straw/milliners needle. I use Jean Lyle's [straw needles](#) and [YLI silk heirloom thread](#). Make a knot at the end.

You will be removing the freezer paper so you need to decide the best spot to start stitching. In this instance the decision is easy as I will be adding the brim over the top part

of Sunbonnet Sue's hat. There is an open end which will eventually be appliquéd over.

With your finger fold the fabric to the back of the freezer paper and gently crease it under. Bring the needle up through the foundation and just catch the edge of the fold. Silk thread virtually disappears when you stitch so you don't have to be absolutely perfect with your spacing but I usually make stitches about one sixteenth of an inch apart to ensure that there are no fraying bits and the piece is secure.

Step 6



Holding the piece firmly with your thumb close to the border, gently turn the fabric under with your needle. It will make a nice sharp edge ready for your next few stitches.

Take tiny stitches by pushing the needle down at a 90 degree angle and then about one sixteenth of an inch along up through the backing fabric and a couple of threads into the edge of the folded appliqué piece. Keep going in this way until you come to the end and then fasten off at the back of the foundation fabric.

Step 7



Insert a blunt ended tool between the fabric and freezer paper.

This is where your [Purple Thang](#) comes in handy but a toothpick or a blunt stiletto will do the job.

Ease the Thang between the freezer paper and the fabric, all the way to the edges of the piece so that the paper is fully released. Be careful not to stretch the fabric.

Step 8



Tug the freezer paper out from beneath the piece. I use hemostats so that I can get a good grip.

Sometimes you will find that you have stitched through the paper. Very carefully hold down the edge of the appliquéd piece with your thumb while you give little tugs with the hemostat. The freezer paper will pull away.

I recommend using straight hemostats rather than the curved points as it is easier to get a hold of the paper edges.

Step 9



When you are stitching down a piece all the way around and there isn't an opening for the freezer paper to be pulled through then there is one more step to be taken.

Leave about three quarters of an inch to an inch undone. Needle turn under this section and lightly run your finger nail along the edge. Leaving the needle threaded, take out the freezer paper as before. Tuck the fabric back under at the crease mark and then carry on stitching to the end.

Lightly press each bit as it is stitched down as the fabric gets very wrinkled while being held. This also helps to give a nice clean finish and

ensures that you can line up your next piece accurately.

Rose Rushbrooke
Artist