

Embroidery tips and tricks

I love embroidery. You can embroider just about anything, from tote bags to pieces of fabric art. I learned how to embroider on my own, and you can, too.

Getting started

I used Jenny Hart's [Sublime Stitching Stitch-It Kit](#). I had the pleasure of meeting Jenny last year, and she's a doll. She's also great at writing clear instructions and illustrating fantastic designs. Her kit involves everything you need- two plain towels, an embroidery hoop, floss of different colors and needles. While you can pick up all the supplies on your own, this kit is an easy way to go.

Creating your design

If you're not using a kit (there are so many to choose from at your local craft store!), you can either iron on a transfer (like those made by Sublime Stitching) or sketch one yourself. If you're doing one yourself, it's best to use a non-permanent marker. Sketch lightly- you don't want your design bleeding through!



Get to it

To thread your needle, separate the thread. I find that two pieces of thread makes for a crisp finished product. Embroidery floss comes as six pieces together. Thread your needle and off you go. Here are two of my favorite stitches. For more detailed instructions, check out [Jenny's tutorials](#).

My favorite stitch is a split stitch. It's great for curvy lines, and always looks tight and polished. It works just like it sounds – make your first stitch a basic, plain stitch, _ , and then bring your needle back up and back down to split the plain stitch in half.

Running stitches are good for straight lines and non-complicated works.

Finishing your work

Depending on what you've stitched, you might want to finish the back for a complete look and to protect your work. I use plain white flannel and a product like stitch witchery to “glue” the flannel on top of your work.

What about clothing?

You can embroider T-shirts, sweatshirts, etc., but make to use stablizer on the back side to keep your stitches from puckering and getting lost in all the layers of cotton magic.

