Bubbles' Menagerie Ltd

The following information is provided as a companion to the episode on It's Sew Easy

Project: Updated Clutch Purse with All Over Embroidery

Materials:

Embroidery design from ibroidery.com	12.5" x 17.5" Bosal tricot fusible interfacing for outer fabric
13" x 18" outer fabric	Tear away Stabilizer
13" x 18" lining fabric	
12.5" x 17.5" fusible fleece	Adhesive spray & painters tape
3.5" x 11" outer fabric for side panels	matching thread
3" x 11" interfacing for side panels (optional)	sew in or magnetic snap

Instructions:

Fabric Preparation:

The first thing I do is precut and prefuse all of my fabric. When adding embroidery to a large surface of fabric - such as doing a big design or all over fabric embellishment - I want to create a stable embroidery surface that can be embroidered using tearaway stabilizer. The brown fabric that I chose to use for this clutch had a bit of stretch to it. This would have required a cutaway stabilizer. I prefer to work with a tearaway stabilizer when multiple hooping, so I needed to make the fabric not stretch.

Fuse Tricot interfacing to wrong side of outer fabric

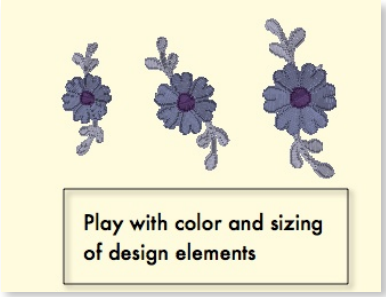
The lining fabric will also provide a bit of structure to the purse. This is accomplished with the fusible fleece ironed to the wrong side.

When fusing either of these fabrics, be sure to follow the instructions for the interfacing and fleece.

Design Preparation:
We are ready to go to the embroidery machine but first let me tell you a little bit about what I did to the design in preparation for this project.

In order to create the allover fabric design with shaped flap closure, I used customizing software to create the layout.

As you can see from the original design, a simple mirror image placement created the flowing curved shape that I wanted for the flap. With software it is very easy to try out different orientations and angles to get the look you want without having to commit.

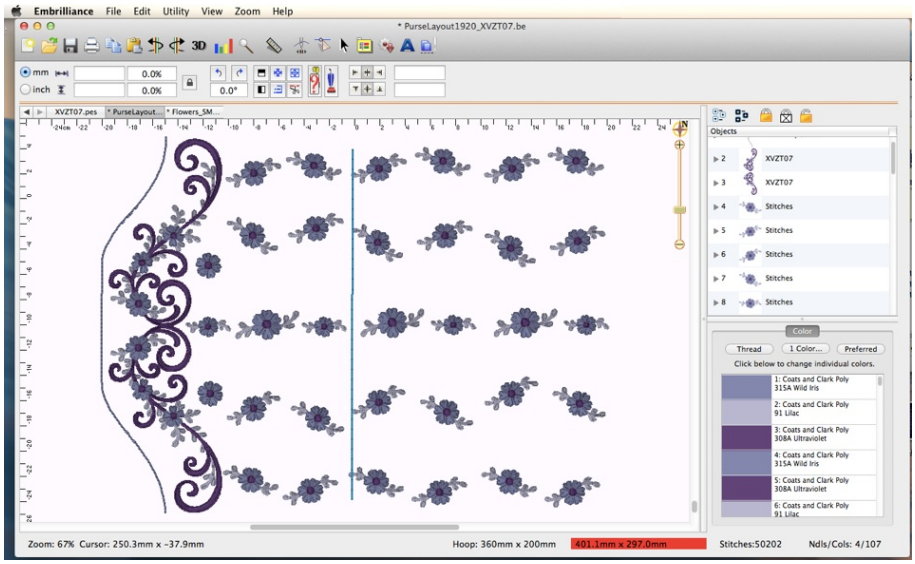


When formulating my plan for creating the design layout I used a couple guidelines:

- I was looking to create a linear style design layout
- The stitched embroidery was going to be done in one color family (tone-on-tone)
- Reducing to 3 colors was the plan

So with this in mind, I first changed to the thread palette I wanted to work with and decided that the yellow centers of the flowers would be stitched in the same color as the swirl.

Next, my linear design could be accomplished by repeating smaller elements of this design. I first looked at repeating the swirls which looked too much like wallpaper to me so I looked at the flowers and leaves. Using my stitch editing and resizing functions I created 3 new designs of the flowers with branches. I was attracted to how the branches mimicked the curves of the swirl and used that as inspiration to create wavy strings of flowers dropping into the ornate swirl flap.



Once I had my layout determined I had two steps left to accomplish. First, I knew that the flap of the clutch was going to be a focal point so the curved edge needed to be perfect and balanced. To do this I used the running stitch tool in

my software to create an evenly spaced from the edge of the embroidery single run line of stitching. My plan was to use this as a guide when stitching at the machine. I set the stitch length to 3.5mm and knew that I would stitch it in a color that would match the fabric - so if any of the stitches showed in the seam, they would not be noticeable.

Couple of tips when creating a guideline like this - take advantage of the zoom function! You want to be able to get up close and personal to see where the line of stitching is going to lie. Second - turn on your grid and use this as a reference for spacing. In this particular design, it was created by mirror imaging the design…so I did the same thing with this line. I created 1/2 and then copy pasted and mirror imaged it to the other side. Use the power of the software to do the math type work so you can be creative.

The next step was to save the design into two (or more) pieces depending on my hoop size and add alignment lines. I use the Embrilliance software for this because it has an alignment line library. There are two posts on my blog that go into detail and explain how to add and use alignment lines. I invite you to check them out!

Alignment Line Library:
http://sewbubbles.wordpress.com/2013/07/10/a-new-library-for-embrilliance-alignments/

How to build alignments into a design:
http://sewbubbles.wordpress.com/2013/04/01/building-alignment-into-designs/

Even when I use an embroidery machine with advanced technology, I prefer to add my alignment lines into each overlapping section. The reason is, is that I can use the zoom on the screen to where those two lines overlap and move them so that the needle points are in the exact same hole. Since the line is part of the design - when I move the lines to match up, I'm moving the entire design.

At the Machine:

So, I hoop tearaway stabilizer by itself and spray it with just a bit of adhesive spray. I like to use Sulky KK2000 with the green cap or Mettler Webbond spray for this. This technique is called "floating". I place my outer fabric, in the hoop using the edge of the hoop as a guide and allowing there to be about 1/2 or less from the stitching. On most of the machines I have stitched on, I put the edge of the fabric at the inner border of the hoop. There is usually a 10mm or so dead space and since I have added a basting box to the design, that box is going to attach the fabric to the stabilizer so that there is no shifting. The box will stitch about 1/4" from the edge of the fabric and I will be using my run stitch as the seam guide so I am good to go.

The basting box holds the fabric in place. The last thing that stitches is the alignment line between the two sections.

Remove the hoop from the machine and carefully trim the stabilizer close to but not cutting the alignment line. At this point, if you do not have the camera function in your

machine, follow the instructions for lining up the lines you have added from the blog post above!

Hoop tearaway stabilizer and spray it lightly. Take the stitched fabric and place it in the hoop in a similar fashion - the line of stitching needs to be in the hoop so that the camera can pick it up when it scans the hoop.

Load the second design and zoom in to move it so that it lines up with the design stitched on the fabric. Once lined up, make sure all is flat, and you can skip forward to color #2 which is the basting box that will secure the fabric to the stabilizer. Stitch the rest of the design.

When the design has finished stitching, remove it from hoop, clip all the basting stitches to remove them and remove all the tearaway stabilizer from the back of the design.

Sewing Construction:
We are now ready to sew our clutch together. If you over size cut your outside fabric, carefully trim it to the size necessary being careful to keep the embroidery centered.

Trim 1/4" away from the top stitched curve to create a seam allowance.

The fleece was fused to the lining and since it was smaller, there should be about 1/4" border around the edge. I like to do this to eliminate bulk in the seams AND it kind of give me a guide to sew with.

Use this edge to line up with the stitched line from the embroidery machine. Make sure your side edges are even. I lined my clutch with a cotton fabric, but if you use a slipper lining type fabric, you want to be extra careful that things do not shift on you.

Carefully pin through all layers. we are going to sew all the way around leaving an opening at the flat bottom to turn thru.

I needed to use a walking foot on my machine to keep the shifting from happening.

Because of the type of fabric I was stitching, I also switched to a ball point needle. Carefully follow the curve along the top and try to stitch on the exact same line to hide the guide we stitched in the hoop.

Carefully trim and clip the corners and along the curved edge. I like to use the Kai 5135C curved utility scissors for jobs like this. They have a polished tip and a slightly curved blade which allows me to grade seams evenly and clip right to the seam line.

Carefully turn this right side out and press. In order to get a flat seam while pressing without flattening the embroidery, I used a damp towel on top as a pressing cloth and kept the iron close to the edge pressing on the embroidered side and the lining side. Because of the low heat setting needed for this fabric, I took my time and went around the edges twice. Yes, at this point you could top stitch all the way around closing the seam. I wanted to sew in a snap so I reached through the lining to attach 1/2 the snap to the flap and pinned the opening closed for the rest of the construction. The last things I did was add the other half of the snap and slip stitch the opening shut.

The side gussets were a bit tricky but using the Clover Wonder Clips certainly helped. First, fold each of the side panels in half along the short edge and sew down the two long sides.

Grade the edges to get rid of the extra bulk.

Turn right side out and fold under a 1/4” pin and press and sew closed.

Again I used the damp pressing cloth to get as sharp a seam as I could.

Long sides together, fold in half and sew the bottom edge. This forms a “pleat” that will go along the bottom of the clutch.

Do this for both sides.

Fold the bottom edge of the finished clutch panel up 5 - 1/4”. This is the starting point and you may need to make adjustments up or down based upon how your side panels fit.

Put the seamed edge at the fold and use the Wonder Clips to clamp the edges together. This is where you double check and adjust to make sure the side panel top and the top of the clutch are even.

I worked both sides with the clips and verified that they were even.

Return to the sewing machine and slowly stitch down and around the side panels with an edge stitch. I used a walking foot again and just sewed really close to the seam. After ripping out the seams twice, I chose to start at the top of each side panel and stitch down to the bottom seam where I ended with a locking stitch. This worked better for me and the gap is so small no one will notice but my clutch is square and not catty whompas. Like my favorite sewing reality TV host says, we just have to “Make it work!”