

Fabrics 101: Embroidering on Quilter's Cotton

Quilter's cotton comes in a rainbow of colors, and it's wonderful to use in projects like placemats, table runners, wall hangings -- and of course, quilts. It's a light fabric, so choose simple and open designs when embroidering on this fabric. Read below, or watch the video, for more tips and recommended techniques!



Project Needs & Notes:

- Good-quality quilter's cotton
- Medium-weight (2.5 ounce) cutaway stabilizer;
- tear-away stabilizer may be used with very light and simple designs

The design featured in this tutorial and video is:

[K4204, Be Happy Wreath](#)

Products Used

Steps To Complete

Choose a good-quality quilter's cotton. Kona cotton is a favorite.



To test the quality, hold it up to the light. If it's transparent, that means it's on the flimsy side.

Sturdier and better fabric has a higher thread count, and will be a better choice for embroidery.

Wash and dry all cotton fabric before embroidering. Cotton will shrink, and if you wait to launder after embroidering, you'll likely see puckering around the stitches.

When choosing designs, select ones that are simple, light, and open.



Some types of designs that work well on quilter's cotton are toile, vintage, and Redwork.

Avoid using complex or highly detailed designs on quilter's cotton, as you may see shifting and misalignment in the stitches, or puckering of the fabric.



A medium-weight (2.5 ounce) cutaway stabilizer is the best choice for quilter's cotton.

Hoop the fabric with one piece of cutaway stabilizer.



Use a size 11 or 75/11 needle (either an embroidery needle or a sharp sewing needle) when embroidering on quilter's cotton.



After embroidering, trim the excess stabilizer away from the back. Leave about 1/2" around the design.

If you're making a quilt block, you can leave the stabilizer behind the entire block, too.

If working with a very light design, such as toile or vintage stitch, tear-away stabilizer may be used.



When choosing tear-away stabilizer, select one that is soft and pliable.

Avoid tear-away stabilizer that is stiff or rigid. That type of stabilizer tears away in chunks when the needle perforates it. That can cause shifting, gapping, and thread tension issues (looping, nesting, and breaks).



Not only does quilter's cotton come in a wide variety of colors, but it comes in endless prints and patterns, too.

In this example, the design was stitched onto solid quilter's cotton, and strips of print cotton were used to make the border.

Enjoy using this wonderful fabric in your projects, and keep the below tips in mind: