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Luggage Spotter Step-by-Step Tutorial

If you've never completed an in-the-hoop project and are a little afraid to try, this Luggage Spotter is the perfect project to get your feet wet on. If you're experienced with in-the-hoop projects, then you'll find this project quick and easy and we all like that from time-to-time don't we? These are great to tag your travel bags with so you can easily spot them coming down the conveyor belt. Go wild and use bright, fun colors! But be forewarned these projects can be addictive!

Supplies to Make One Luggage Spotter:

Cut 2 pieces of fabric 6" x 6"

Cut 1 piece of batting 6" x 6"

Wash away stabilizer (mesh type)

Spray adhesive

1 1/4" wide elastic headband (Bright colored shoe strings could be substituted.)

Stencil cutter (optional)

1. To begin with, wind a bobbin with thread to match the color you plan on using for the satin outline and stipple stitch. Hoop wash away stabilizer (the mesh type that holds up to a higher stitch count) in your hoop and stitch out the first color using regular bobbin thread in the bobbin. It doesn't matter what color is on top at this point as this is just a placement line (Figure 1).



Figure 1

2. Cut a piece of batting large enough to cover the placement line. *Lightly* spray the stabilizer that's in the hoop with spray adhesive. Lay the batting on top of the placement line (Figure 2).



Figure 2

3. Cut two pieces of fabric large enough to cover the placement line as you did before for the batting. *Lightly* spray the batting in the hoop and lay one fabric piece, right side up, on top of the batting (Figure 3).



Figure 3

4. Turn the hoop over, *lightly* spray the backside of the stabilizer with spray adhesive and place the second piece of fabric right side up (Figure 4).



Figure 4

5. Place hoop back into the embroidery machine and sew out the second color. This will tack everything into place (Figure 5). Take hoop out of machine (but not the fabric out of the hoop) and check the top and bottom to make sure nothing has slipped. If anything did slip, simply take out the tack down stitches and repeat the second color.



Figure 5

6. If everything looks good, now is the time to trim closely around the outer stitching line (being careful not to trim the stabilizer) to remove the excess batting and fabric from the top and bottom (Figures 6, 7 and 8). **Note:** You'll notice I've digitized two tack down stitching lines. The inner stitching line is a "safety stitch" just in case you trim a little too close, you won't ruin your project.



Figure 6



Figure 7



Figure 8

7. Load up the embroidery machine for the next two colors (stipple and satin stitching) *using matching thread in the bobbin* (Figures 9 and 10). Complete the rest of the embroidery design using colors of your choice. Place a drop of seam sealant to the knot on the satin stitch outline.



Figure 9



Figure 10

8. If you have a stencil cutter, this works great to trim away the wash away stabilizer (Figure 11). Just heat up the stencil cutter and slide along the outer edges of the Luggage Spotter. It cuts the stabilizer like butter leaving no pokies!



Figure 11

9. Cut out the buttonholes using the method of your choice. I like to use a buttonhole cutter and wooden block (Figure 12).



Figure 12

10. Cut the 1/4" wide elastic head band in two. Wrap the Luggage Spotter around the handle of travel bag and using the elastic head band, lace up the Spotter like you would a tennis shoe (Figure 13). Tie elastic headband at the top with a bow (Figure 14). Tie a knot at each bow end if desired. Turn the Spotter around with lettering on top (Figure 15).



Figure 13



Figure 14



Figure 15

11. I hope you enjoy creating many Luggage Spotters for friends and family. I know I enjoyed creating them for you! Be sure to send me pictures of your creations! I'd love to see what you come up with.

Hoping you enjoy tons of sewing fun! ☺

Bonnie