

Machine Appliqué Basics

The type of stitch you use can affect the look of the finished appliqué. If you have a machine with lots of stitches, you may want to experiment with different stitches to find the one you like best. Machines with many stitch options may also have a special appliqué foot, which can make it easier to see what you're doing. Consult your machine manual for instructions on using the different stitches and feet.

On a simpler machine, you may only have the option of using a zigzag or a buttonhole stitch. Use the zigzag stitch for larger appliqués with finished edges, as I did for *Looptastic* (page 86), and a buttonhole stitch for raw-edge fusible appliqués, as in *Owl Eyes* (page 70).



Finished-edge appliqué on *Looptastic*

Getting Ready to Appliqué

1. Fit your machine with a new needle and adjust the settings for machine appliqué. Depending on the machine, this may mean using a specialty appliqué stitch, a satin stitch, a buttonhole stitch, or a plain zigzag stitch.
2. Begin on the right side of an appliqué shape. Bring the needle down in the right-hand position, just outside the appliqué; start stitching, encasing the edge of the appliqué in the

stitches. Raise the presser foot to pivot the block as necessary. *The needle should always be down before you raise the presser foot or pivot the block.*



Stitching around *Looptastic* appliqué

3. When you reach your starting point, backtrack a few stitches; then remove the project from the machine and use tweezers or a seam ripper to gently pull the loose threads to the back side. Trim the threads and move on to the next appliqué.



Stitching around *Owl Eyes* appliqué

tip When pivoting around convex curves and angles (such as the outside of an oval or a loop), the needle should be down in the *right-hand* position, just outside the appliqué. When stitching around concave curves and angles (such as the inside of an oval or a loop), the needle should be down in the *left-hand* position, through the appliqué piece.