

Embellishing with Iron-ons

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SEW-lutions Guidelines

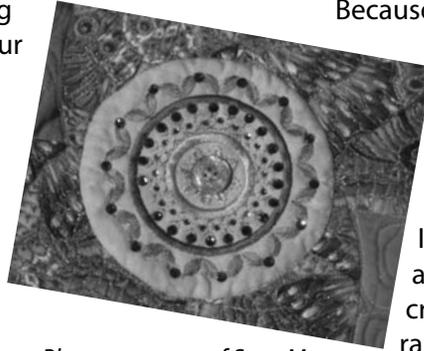
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Adding a bit of bling to your day (and your outfit) is easy with today's technology! Whether you want to showcase crystals, studs, pearls or metallic nailheads, they can simply be heat-set on your project.



*Photo courtesy of Sara Moe,
Spinning Pinwheel Quilts*

Bit by Bit

Shapes can be purchased individually, in assortments or in pre-packaged amounts of a single shape depending on your design needs. Allow a few extra shapes for practicing.

When purchasing press-ons, the shape will be designated by diameter, such as 2, 3 or 4mm. Metal findings may be available in a shiny or matte surface, depending on the desired look.

Hot Tips

There are two ways to apply embellishments: using a hot tool applicator, or with a household iron. Applicators are wand-like tools with interchangeable points that heat up and melt the adhesive on the back of the press-on shapes.

The applicator tips come in a variety of sizes and shapes, including those designed to fit over a dome-shape jewel, or with a flat tip to heat a larger surface. Always select the tip that most closely fits the size and shape of the iron-on you're using.

There are several brands of hot tools, but most require about five minutes to heat prior to use.



*Photo courtesy of
Creative Crystal*

Because the tip can burn anything it comes in contact with, use the safety stand to keep the tip off the protected work surface. It's best to use a non-flammable surface, like a glass cutting board, for safety.

Individual shapes can be applied one at a time to fill a design area or to create a pattern, or they can be randomly sprinkled over a fabric surface to add sparkle.

Tool Tactics

Detailed instructions vary depending on the brand of hot tool, but most suggest that you actually pick up the embellishment with the tool tip, set it in place and release. Some suggest holding the tool in place for a few seconds to thoroughly melt the adhesive and allow the jewel to adhere to the fabric.

Holding the shape too long can result in the adhesive puddling and seeping out from under the embellishment, creating an unsightly stain. Also, the base fabric may melt from the heat, depending on its fiber content. Use a few jewels to practice on scraps before starting your project to be sure you have the technique and timing mastered.

Shaping Up

If you think you're not artistic and need help with designs, look for pre-made motifs from flowers to skulls—there's something for every occasion. These motifs are comprised of individual shapes attached to a clear protective sheet keeping them intact until they're pressed into place on the fabric.

Although instructions vary, most motifs are adhered using a dry iron and a press cloth to melt the adhesive. Some brands recommend pressing from the wrong side to securely fuse the embellishments after the initial right-side attachment.

Also note on the product instructions whether the protective sheet is to be peeled away immediately after pressing while it's still warm, or if it should cool before removal.

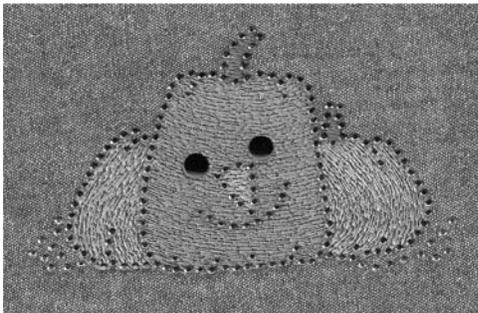
When properly applied, most embellishments can withstand hand washing or dry cleaning, but be sure to read the label for details

Creative Combos

Iron-on embellishments can be used in combination with other art techniques, like hand or machine embroidery, stamping, decorative stitching or quilting. 🧵



Photo courtesy of Bobbie Bullard Designs



Sue's Sparkler's design