Directions for Monogrammed Luggage Tag / August 2003

(This project utilizes letters from our Romanesque Monogram Set 1)

Step 1. Print the instructions.

> These are .pdf files, and require Adobe Acrobat Reader software in order to view and print.

Step 2. Prepare the fabric.

> We used ultrasuede for this project. In addition to having a nice smooth texture, ultrasuede can be trimmed without the edge unravelling. It is also reasonably thin, which can be an issue for inserting the finished embroidery into the recess in the plastic luggage tag.

> If you use a different fabric it would be a good idea to check to see that it isn't too thick for the holder (see further on in these instructions for an alternate installation method)

> We fused a layer of Wonder-Under (or other heat fusible pellon) to the back side of a piece of ultrasuede with a hot iron.

> When the surface cools, remove the paper backing, then fuse a layer of medium-weight backing to the ultrasuede.

Step 3. Sew the Monogram.

> Choose the appropriate letter. Any of the smaller sizes from this style will fit comfortably within the circular luggage tag holder.

Step 4. Trim the fabric.

> The luggage tag holder has two parts. There is a circular holder, with key ring attached, and a smaller snap-in face plate.

> Use the face plate as a template for trimming the fabric. Place it over the embroidery, positioned so that the monogram is centered within the circle, then trace around the plastic circle with a sharp pencil.

> Trim carefully around the percil line with a sharp pair of scissors. You will need to trim slightly inside the pencil line for the finished embroidery to fit within the holder.

> (Optional: Since the rear surface of the embroidery will also be visible, you may wish to trim an additional circle from medium-weight colored paper to cover the rear surface).

Step 5. Assemble the Luggage Tag.

> Place the trimmed fabric circle inside the holder, finished side up. (If you are using a backing sheet of paper, place the paper circle in the holder first.) Orient the monogram letter so that the top of the letter aligns with the circular keyring.

> Firmly snap the cover piece in place.

Optional Variations:

> 1. There are variations in the thickness of the fabric, backing and paper backpiece that may make it difficult the snap the lid in place. This luggage tag is really designed for use with a photograph - using it for embroidery requires more thickness to the inserted monogram.

We felt that the lid might come off at some point, so decided on a more durable installation by permanently bonding the lid to the rest of the holder with Super Glue Gel. Super Glue is a bit messy and hard to control, so we opted for installing the monogrammed fabric face down in the holder, with the paper backing behind it. We ran a thin bead of Super Glue along the edge of the smaller plastic circle, then pressed it firmly into place - holding the edges until the glue set.

The advantage to installing the embroidery face-down is that the excess glue is now on the back of the tag. We went a bit further and carefully sanded this surface with # 400 grit wet-and-dry sandpaper to clean up the surface.

2. The luggage tag, as received from the manufacturer, is clear. When we sanded the rear surface we found that the sanding created a softer "frosted" look - we extended this quality a bit further by carefully sanding around the outside of the front surface as well, leaving a clear center area to display the monogram.

3. To give the tag a little more contrast we used a black permanent marker - one that is permanent on plastic - to draw a careful circle on the front of the tag, aligned with the edge of the fabric circle. We used a water glass that was the perfect diameter to trace around.

Congratulations! Your project is complete.

Sources for Materials

Heat-fusible Pelon, Ultrasuede, Stabilizer

Widely available from sewing stores. Pelon is marketed as "Wonder-Under" or similar.

Round Key and Luggage Tag:

Available for purchase online from Kapres and Company at:

http://www.kapres.com/clear/clear.htm#luggage