

Hooping a shirt

Please keep in mind this is how I do it. There are probably a million other ways to do it, but this is the way I have found works best for me!



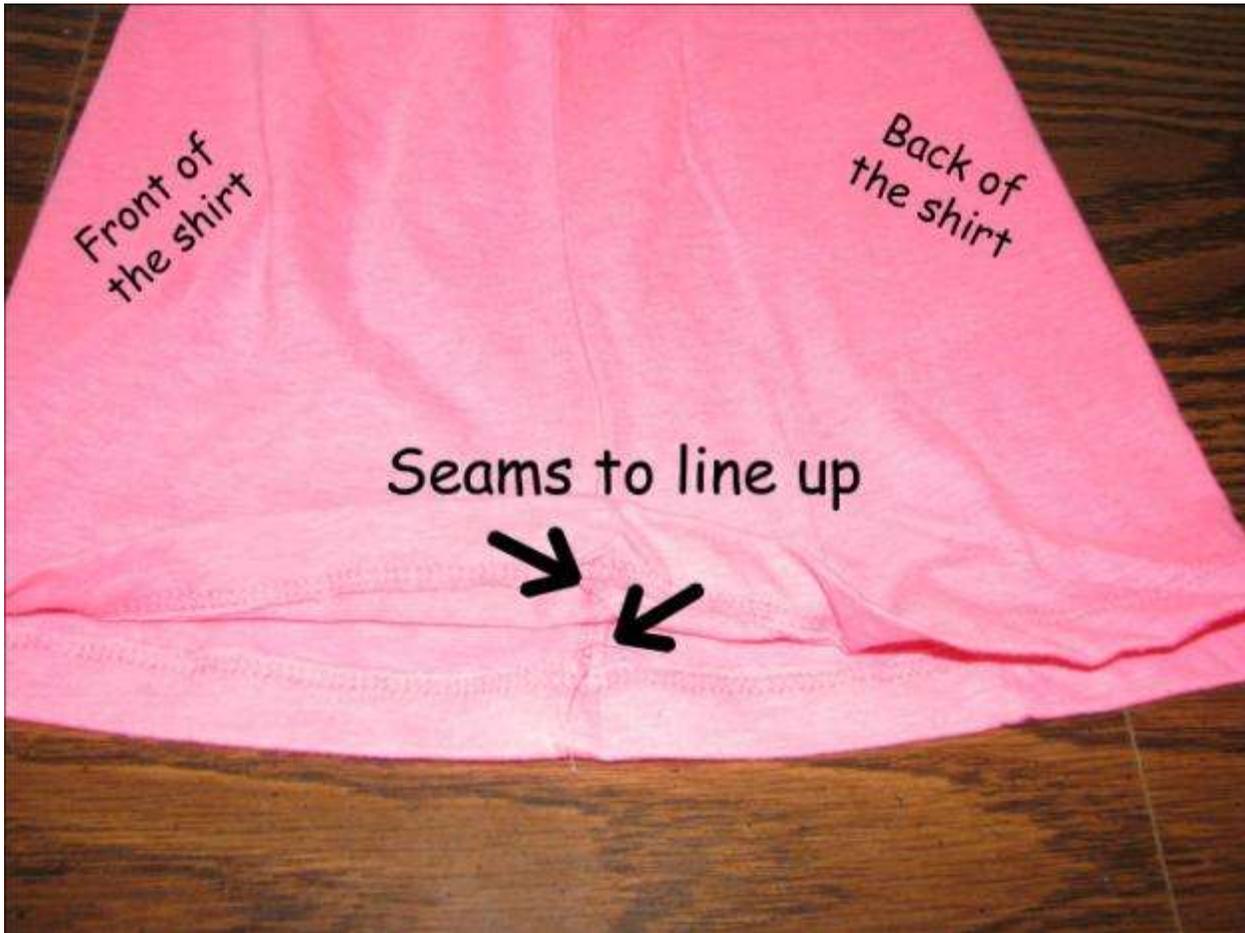
Instructions:

1. Start with any shirt, tank, halter, whatever it might be that you want to embroider on.



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2. Take the bottom of the shirt and line up the side seams so the left side seam of the shirt is against the right side seam of the shirt, about 1 inch above the hem of the shirt. Basically, you fold it in half so the fold is in the middle of the shirt and look at the inside seams.



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3. Gently smooth the shirt out so it is folded in the very center of the shirt at the bottom.



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4. Don't worry about the top section for now, you just need the bottom about an inch or so above the hem lined up. Pinch the fabric between your fingers to keep it still and make a crisp fold. Make a dot with a washable fabric marker right in the middle of your fold. Now you have the very center of the bottom part of the shirt.



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5. Now take the inside sleeve seams a few inches under the shoulder seams where it starts to make the curve as it goes around the arm sleeve on the shirt and line them up.



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6. Line these inside seams up.



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7. Keeping those seams together, smooth the shirt flat.



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8. Again, pinch shirt together to make a crisp fold and make a tiny dot in the center.



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9. Now you have two marks on your shirt- one at the top center and one at the bottom center.



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10. Connect the dots using a straight edge. I like to use my cutting board edge for everything, but anything works! On smaller shirts I've resorted to using my daughter's notebook edge! Anything stiff, straight, and flat that will let you draw a straight line will do the job!



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11. You now have a line down the very center of your shirt.



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Jan. 3

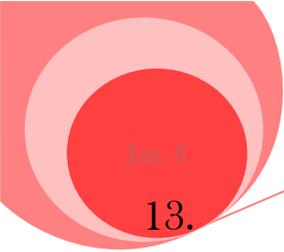
12.

Since this is a t-shirt and a stretchy knit fabric, you want to use a sticky backed stabilizer. I like sulky sticky +, which is a self adhesive stabilizer you can buy as a packaged roll from Joann's or Hancock's. It's kind of pricey, so be sure you have a coupon if it's not on sale! The sticky + has a backing that you peel off, then it just sticks to the shirt like one big sticker, and yet you can peel it off easily and tear it away after you stitch on it. Also, if you get it wet it makes it super easy to peel and tear off. There are other kinds of stabilizer like an iron on adhesive and other brands, this is just the one I get because I'm usually at Joann's anyway and it's easy to toss a roll of it in the cart. Try some out and see what you think works the best for the best price! To use your sticky stabilizer, there are two ways of doing it. You can either cut a piece an inch or two bigger than your hoop so you hoop the shirt and sticky stabilizer together. The other way is to see how big your design is and cut the stabilizer an inch or two bigger than the design area, then use tear away in your whole hoop. I do it the second way when using the hoop I plan on using for the design going on this shirt because my hoop is about 7 inches wider than the design, which is a huge waste of expensive sticky stabilizer. So, I cut a piece of sticky stabilizer roughly 8 inches by 8 inches because my design is about $6\frac{1}{4}$ x $6\frac{3}{4}$ inches big. Turn the shirt inside out and stick the stabilizer to the shirt in the center. You usually want to hoop your shirt as far up towards the neck as possible. Most hoops have about an inch or two of dead space, where the embroidery doesn't reach the edge of the hoop because it needs room to be sure the foot of the machine doesn't hit the frame of the hoop. So even if you were to hoop at the very top, your design will be at least a couple inches lower than the neckline. This shirt is a size 7/8 and I'm hooping it about 2 inches below the neckline. On smaller shirts, I would hoop it about $\frac{1}{2}$ inch below the neckline. So, I stick the sticky stabilizer on the inside of the shirt. If you miss the very middle of it, no worries, that's why you cut your stabilizer an inch or two bigger than you actually needed.

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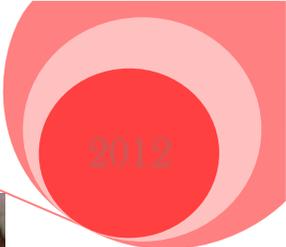


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13. Gently turn your shirt right side out. Careful not to pull or stretch your shirt out when you do it, you don't want to tear your sticky off! And now you have a center line down your shirt so you can line your shirt up in your hoop. Most hoops come with a grid that you can set inside your hoop and line up your center line with your grid. If you didn't get one with your hoop or lost yours (or dropped it and then stepped on it and snapped it in half like me) you can measure your hoop and draw on the edge with a sharpie marker, which is what I did. Then you line up your marks with the line down the center of your shirt. If you used the smaller amount of sticky stabilizer like I did, you will need to cut a piece an inch or two bigger than your hoop and put inside your shirt, then put your bottom hoop under it, then secure your top hoop on the shirt. If you used the larger piece of sticky stabilizer, put your bottom hoop inside your shirt and then secure your top hoop on.

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Jan. 31

15. Now you can embroider! Here is my shirt!



16. And when I take it out of the hoop!

