

FABRIC

AND

EMBROIDERY DIGITIZING

As professionals in the promotional products and apparel industry, you already know that the right fabric is essential to successful embroidery projects. Based on the designs, you have to select fabrics that can support them. But in those times when your clients choose the fabrics or garments, it's essential to adapt the designs so they can sew properly.

Here is some insight from our expert team that might help you make the right decisions for your clients and their projects.



WEIGHT

WHAT IS THE WEIGHT OF THE ENTIRE PROJECT?

FABRIC:

is the fabric light enough to pull and stretch with heavy yarn, beading and ribbon?

THREAD:

is the thread so heavy it will show through to the front of designs or so delicate it will get lost in heavy fabrics?



WEAVE

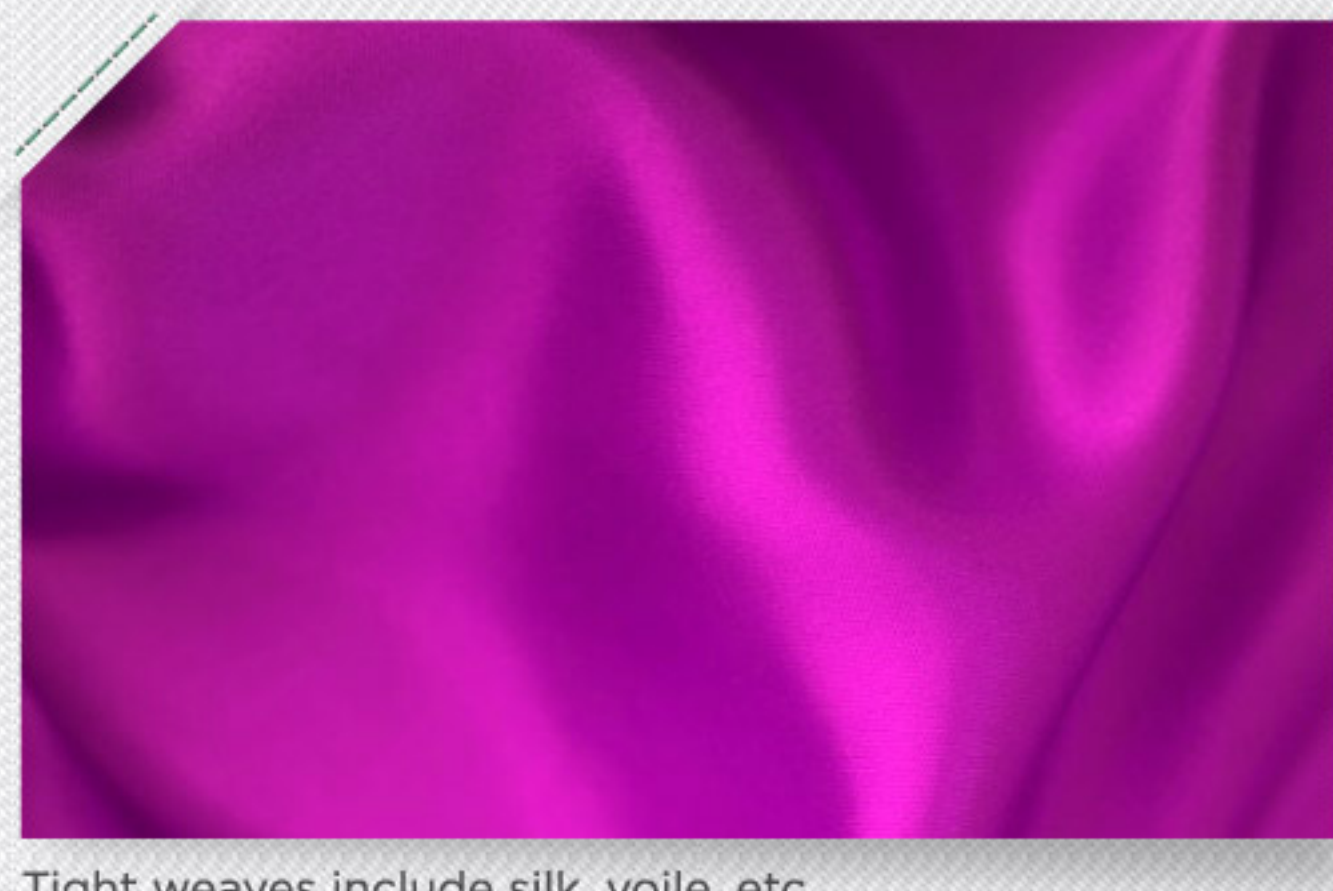
IS THE WEAVE OF THE FABRIC STRONG ENOUGH TO HOLD THE THREADS IN PLACE AND NOT BE OVERWHELMING (BE AWARE OF THREAD COUNT)?

LOOSE WEAVES



Loose weaves include cotton, muslin, linen, etc., and work better for larger threads.

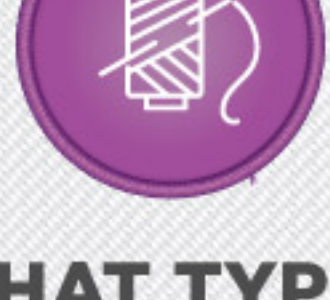
TIGHT WEAVES



Tight weaves include silk, voile, etc.

28↑

Most forms of surface embroidery require a firm fabric foundation, often with a thread count of 28 or higher.



STITCHING

WHAT TYPE OF STITCHING WILL YOU BE USED MOST (E.G., SIMPLE STITCHES OR ELABORATE ONES THAT WILL BUILD UP IN WEIGHT AND SIZE)?



FINISH

HOW DO YOU WANT THE PROJECT TO APPEAR WHEN COMPLETE?

MATTE FABRIC:



non-reflective for busy designs or shiny and bold threads (muslin, unpolished cottons, calico, burlap, etc.).

SHINY FABRIC:



greater contrast between the designs and the backgrounds that can add polish (e.g., satin, synthetics, etc.).

DIGITIZING SUGGESTIONS

FOR SOME FABRICS

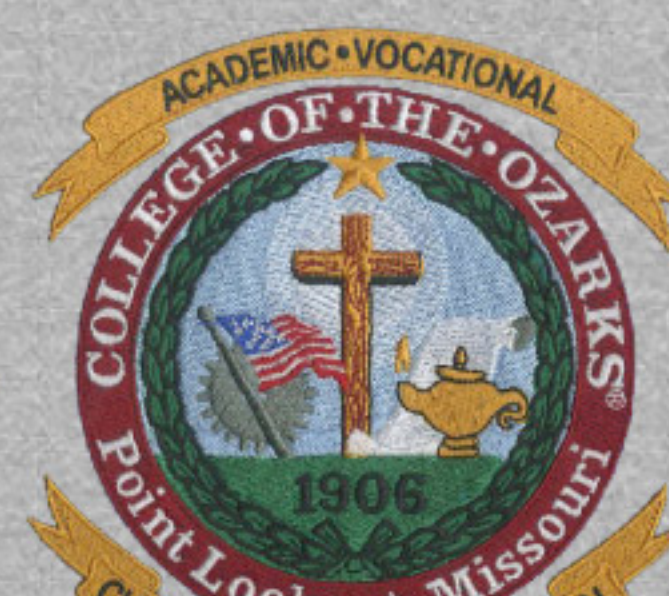
PERFORMANCEWEAR

The fabrics used in athleisure garments are designed for movement, comfort, stretch and moisture wicking, but not necessarily for embroidery. Those designs with low density that won't overly restrict fabric that was meant to have give will work. In general, it helps to avoid high stitch counts. Choose designs with satin stitches and skip those with a lot of fill.



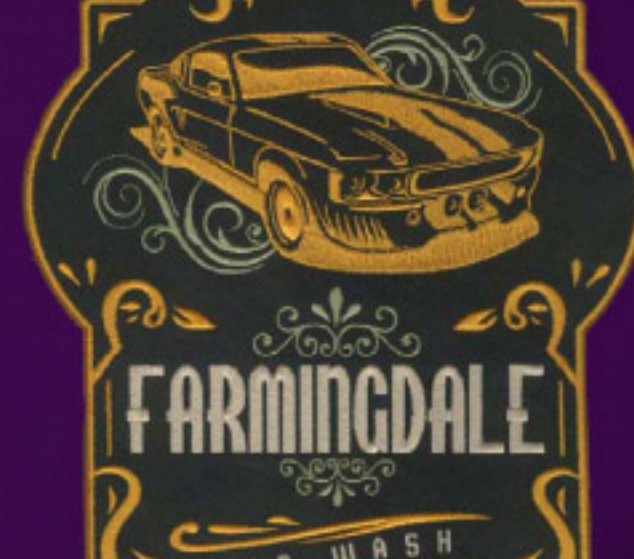
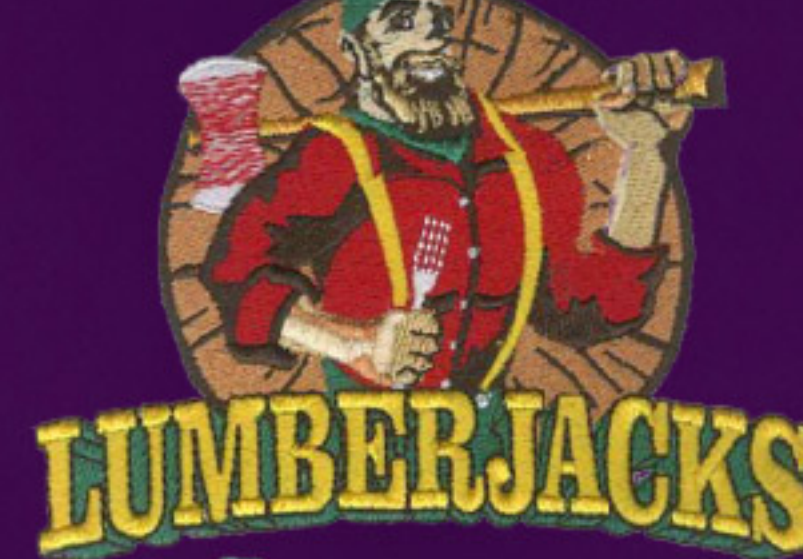
FLEECEWEAR

Designs with thin elements or logos with small lettering will need a solid base. You may need to sew a standard area fill using a zig-zag underlay stitch in the same color of the fabric before embroidering for all or part of the design. This will provide a smooth, supportive surface — above the nap of the fleece — for the detail or lettering to "sit" on. Another option is to create a light-density fill at opposing angles in order to create a "net" effect that traps down the fibers of the fabric.



OUTERWEAR

Most jackets are embroidery friendly, especially soft-shell jackets, which produce crisp embroidery. Digitize them the way you would caps: Do the element that is farthest behind first and work forward. In addition, think about arranging so the design is sewn from the center out and from the bottom up so the stitches don't push one fill into another. This method also ensures good registration and that jackets will end up laying flat.



TOWELS AND OTHER PLUSH FABRICS

The fabric of towels, bathrobes, polar fleece and even stuffed animals requires special considerations to prevent the stitches from getting lost in the pile. Option are: 1) use a water-soluble topping to create a smooth surface for embroidery, 2) use a knock-down fill, which is usually a set of two light(er) density fills programmed at opposing angles and applied before a design is embroidered (the light fill acts as a mesh to hold down the pile), and 3) use appliqué to cover the pile completely with material — probably the most comprehensive method.



Another alternative to embroidery digitizing challenges is to leverage **Idea Custom Solutions**.

With us, you get fast turn times and competitive rates. More importantly, you get quality that is Six Sigma-certified and award-winning.



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