

Fabric Postcards/Quilted Nametags

Stamping on fabric:

1. Use an ink or paint that is permanent on fabric like Fabrico, Crafter's, or Memories pigment ink, or use a medium-bodied fabric paint like Lumiere. After drying, most must be heat-set to become permanent.
2. Iron freezer paper to the back of your fabric to keep it from slipping.
3. You will get the clearest impressions on tightly woven fabric. Select stamps with bold designs if you're using paint or moderate fine detail if you're using ink.
4. Place the stamp image side up on your table and lightly tap the raised surface with the ink pad.
5. Use an up and down motion when stamping on fabric—don't rock the stamp or the image will smear. Press firmly on all areas of the stamp to make good contact with the fabric. Lift the stamp straight up. When using larger stamps, place a mouse pad under the fabric.
6. Clean your stamps right away using baby wipes or stamp cleaner. You can use a wet toothbrush to remove paint that doesn't come out of nooks and crannies, but avoid immersing stamps on wooden blocks.
7. Let the image dry and heat-set as recommended by the ink manufacturer.

Stenciling on fabric:

1. Iron freezer paper to the back of your fabric or tape it to your work surface so it doesn't move around.
2. You can buy pre-cut mylar or brass stencils or make your own with freezer paper.
3. Iron or tape your stencil to the fabric so it doesn't slip. Mask off unwanted open areas with post-its.
8. Use an ink or paint that is permanent on fabric like Fabrico, Crafter's, or Memories pigment ink, or use a medium-bodied fabric paint like Lumiere. After drying, most must be heat-set to become permanent.
4. Load a stencil brush or make-up sponge with ink or paint. Work the paint into the brush and tap off any extra paint on a piece of paper towel or scratch paper. If your brush is too “juicy,” the extra paint will seep under the stencil and your lines will be blurry.
5. Use an up and down “pouncing” motion to apply paint to the fabric through the stencil.
6. If you're applying more than one color to the same stencil, let the first color dry before apply the second one. Use a separate brush or sponge for each color.
7. Carefully remove the stencil, let dry and heat-set as recommended.

Fusible Appliqué':

1. Since you will be quilting your postcard, select a “sewable” fusible web. The heavier weight ones will probably work as well, but could be difficult to sew through.
2. Mark the design on the paper side of the fusible web.
3. Cut around the design approximately 1/4” outside the drawn lines.
4. Follow the manufacturer's directions to fuse the web to the wrong side of your fabric.
5. Cut out the design on the drawn line, use a rotary cutter with a pinking blade, or cut shapes with the Coluzzle cutting system.
6. Remove the backing paper and position on your backing fabric. Fuse as directed.
7. If your design has lots of parts, you can pre-assemble it on an appliqué' pressing sheet. As long as the pieces overlap, you can position them as desired, then “heat-tack” them together. Once the unit cools, peel it up from the pressing sheet, position it on your backing and fuse in place.

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Using Fast2Fuse:

1. Fast2Fuse has adhesive on both sides, so you must use an appliqué pressing sheet or baking parchment paper!
2. Cut your fabric approximately 1/2" larger than the Fast2Fuse—you will trim the excess off after fusing. Finished postcards should measure 4" x 6".
3. Place the Fast2Fuse on the pressing sheet. Place the front fabric right-side up on top of the Fast2Fuse.
4. Press with a hot, dry iron for 5 seconds.
5. Trim fabric even with the edges of the Fast2Fuse.
6. Turn your postcard over so the unfused side is up. Place the backing (either fabric or paper) on top and press with a hot, dry iron for 5 seconds. If your threads or embellishments are heat sensitive, use a press cloth!
7. Trim backing even with the edges of the Fast2Fuse.
8. You can quilt your postcard "sandwich" after step 5 or 7. If you're going to mail your postcard, you may want to quilt and then apply the backing. For a nametag, you probably want to fuse both sides, then quilt.
9. Once you're done quilting, press firmly with a hot iron and steam for 10 seconds. Flip and press the other side for 10 seconds, and now your design is permanently fused.

Machine Embroidery:

1. Postcards are a fun way to try out some of your sewing machine's fancy stitches. Decorative stitches generally require a stabilizer to prevent puckering, so wait to do your stitching until you have fused your front to the Fast2Fuse. For postcards, stitch before fusing your backing on—otherwise it will be hard to write a message.
2. Computerized embroidery designs make fun postcards as well (this is a good way to use test stitch-outs!) Since Fast2Fuse is probably too stiff to hoop, hoop the fabric and a tear-away stabilizer and stitch as usual. Remove the stabilizer, press the design, and make your sandwich as noted above.
3. If your postcard could use a little texture, try couching yarn after Fast2Fuse step 5 above.

Finishing Your Postcard:

1. You can finish the edges of your postcard with a traditional binding, satin stitching, or a fused binding.
2. It is hard to make satin stitching look good with just one pass (although coverage depends on the thread you're using). Use an open-toed or clear plastic foot with a depression underneath so you can see what you're doing and so the satin stitch passes under the foot easily. Pivot on the corners to get good coverage all the way to the edge. Do a second pass with a slightly wider stitch for a cleaner finish.
3. Scrapbook stores have some of the coolest doodads! Look for brads, eyelets, buttons, letters, etc. If you plan to mail your postcard, all embellishments must be flat and securely attached.
4. To attach a brad or eyelet, use an awl or large needle to make a starter hole through the fabric and Fast2Fuse. Push the brad through the hole and bend the legs down to secure. If you're planning to use your creation as a nametag, attach the brad before fusing the backing on—that way the legs won't snag on your clothes. Use Gem-Tac to attach flat-backed trinkets to your nametag.