How to Make a Fabric Sign!

This tutorial uses fusible applique to make a fabric sign you'll display in an embroidery hoop.

Supplies!

Ok, first, pick your hoop I'm using a 9 inch hoop soooo:

> 9 inch hoop
> 10x10 square of background fabric
> 10x10 square of batting*
> 8x8 scrap of fabric for letters OR an assortment of scraps all different sizes.
> 8x8 piece of fusible webbing

Change the sizes according to your hoop – for example:

> 6 inch hoop
> 7x7 square of background fabric
> 7x7 square of extra batting*
> 5x5 scrap of fabric for letters or whatever!
> 5x5 piece of fusible webbing

*The Batting is optional – but you'll want to use a tear-away or dissolvable stabilizer while sewing the letters down if you don't use the batting otherwise your fabric will tend to stretch and distort.
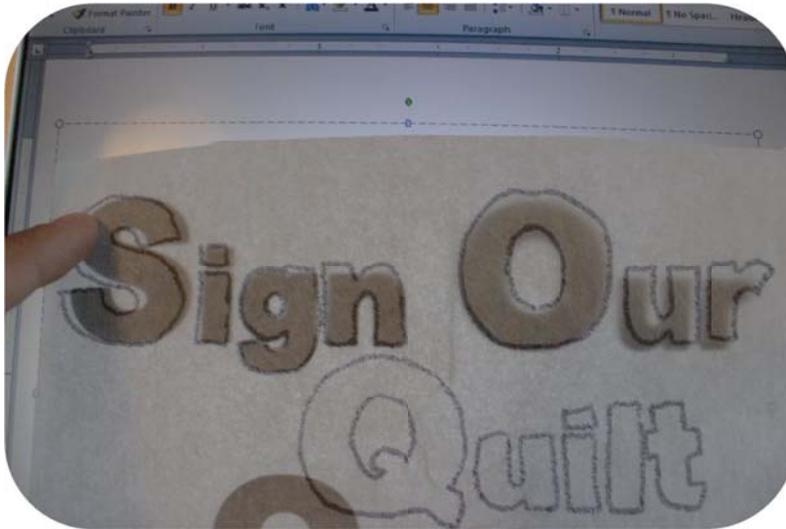
You may also want:

> Basting spray
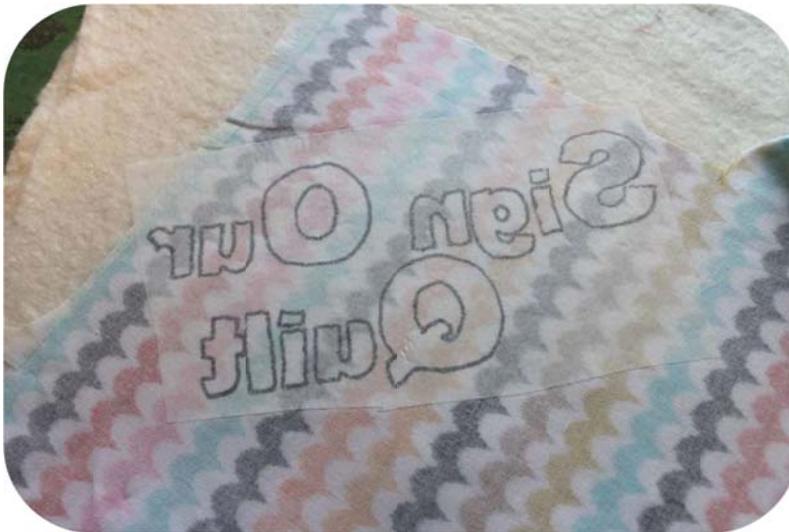
Cardboard for backing

Make Your Letters:

Pick a slogan and a font – I like good old Arial Black for easy tracing, but any bold font will do. You can either print out your design to trace or trace directly from your screen onto the fusible webbing.

In this example, I am tracing directly onto the gluey/webby side of the fusible webbing – not the paper backing.

This is harder to write on, so I used a sharpie, though a pencil will work.

The fusible webbing melts when you iron it; it will fix your letters down and keep the edges from fraying.

Iron the image onto the WRONG SIDE your fabric so that it BACKWARDS on the WRONG SIDE of your fabric. Use the manufacturer's instructions to iron.

Fabric Note: I ironed this at an angle because I wanted the stripes to be diagonal. If you prefer, you can use as many different fabrics as you like for the letters. Simply trace the letters with more space between them and cutting the fusible webbing into multiple pieces.

When you have ironed the fusible webbing and it is cooled, peel off the paper. You can use a straight pin to start the edge of the paper to make it easier to peel.

Tracing directly onto the fusible webbing made my writing show up on the fabric; allowing me to pull off the paper in one fell swoop instead of picking it off each fiddly little letter. The drawback of this is there is no way to remove the ink so you may be able to see the ink on the front of your fabric. Use a lighter pen if you are concerned about this, or do a test swatch.

Cut out the letters! Short, sharp, pointed tip scissors will make you happier.

As you cut, lay out the letters onto your background fabric. This is so you don't lose the little pieces…not that I would have a problem with that!

Make sure the background fabric is ironed and smooth.

You may wish to use a pencil or hera marker (or anything else removable) to trace the outline of your hoop into the background fabric! This will allow you to place your letters within the hoop.

You can use a ruler to perfect the layout.

And when you have the letters where you want them, iron them down!

Quilt it!

Layer with the batting (or interfacing/stabilizer if you prefer. If using batting, you may prefer to use basting spray or just a regular glue stick to hold the layers together.

I used a dark gray thread to quilt down the letters. You can use any stitch you prefer. I used a straight stitch and in this example I have used my free-motion foot to trace the letters and add a small amount of decorative stitching.

When the piece is sewn, remove any markings necessary.

Frame it!

Use the inner, smaller piece of your wooden hoop to trace a circle onto a piece of cardboard and cut that out. This will be the back piece, you can decorate the cardboard backing with a layer of fabric or paper if you like.

Center your fabric in the hoop. You'll likely need to unscrew the top nearly all the way. Tighten your piece into place.

Now fold all extra fabric and batting on the back towards the middle, and press the cardboard circle over top of this. It should fit snugly inside the hoop and hold all the extra fabric neatly in place.

You may need to pull the cardboard out and trim to fit. If you prefer, you can add a bead of glue around the edge to hold it more permanently in place.

And you're done! Taa-daa!