

## Guide to Applique

Disclaimer – Please note that I use my own terminology and my blogs, tips and tricks are my own way of crafting. There are so many different ways to applique, find what is comfortable for you.

### *Meaning of applique -*

‘decorative work in which one piece of cloth is sewn or fixed onto another, or the activity of decorating cloth in this way’ – [www.dictionary.cambridge.org](http://www.dictionary.cambridge.org)

“Applique is a sewing technique that involves stitching a small piece of fabric onto a larger one to make a pattern or design. You could decorate your jeans using applique, sewing flowers and stars on them. When you use applique to decorate something like a pillow or a handbag, you often cut out fabric shapes and sew or glue them on. Applique is the technique that's used to make sports or college banners as well, attaching letters to the triangular fabric.” – [www.vocabulary.com](http://www.vocabulary.com)

**NOTE:** Prewash all fabrics and iron/press.

Supplies:

Fabric (scraps)

Interfacing - Fusible

Tracing paper/freezer paper

Pencil

Sewing shears

Sewing and paper scissors

Tear-away stabilizer - optional

Sewing thread and Embroidery floss

Sewing needle and embroidery needle

Press Cloth – old pillow works well

Sewing machine

Applique template

Décor – buttons, beads, ribbon, etc. Go wild and create to your heart's delight.

Project you wish to applique – cushion cover, tote bag, etc.

### Step 1.

Choose one of our applique patterns/templates or create your own. Print the applique template – remember to set your printer to 100 %, full size A4.

For this tutorial we will be creating a mushroom applique. See our tips below how to create your own applique template.

**NOTE:** You will need a separate pattern piece for each layer.

### Step 2.

Trace your template onto tracing paper, brown paper or freezing paper.

### Step 3.

Choosing your fabrics.

The best part of creating with applique is that you can use almost any fabric – cotton, felt, organza, etc.

I love cotton/quilting cotton and felt. I also recommend if you are a beginner is to choose a cotton fabric.

You can mix and match your fabrics – florals, stripes, dotty and mix and match your colours. You can use pastel colours or bold or a mix of both. This is what I love about applique, it is about creating a collage of happiness and creativity.

Please note that some fabrics will fray more than others. There are several ways to slow down/controlling fraying.

Two commonly used processes are:

1 – Use interfacing (most popular and easy to use) and

2 – Use fray check.

This will not stop the fraying completely.

Step 4.

Cut your applique pieces using the template/s – as per pattern tutorial/guide.

Trace applique pieces onto the right side of the fabric and cut out.

Trace onto interfacing and roughly cut out , leaving small border – 2/3 mm. Do not cut on the template outline.

**NOTE:** that any design you use will produce an appliqué that is a 'mirror image' of the template you started with. If you'd like your appliqué to appear the same as the template, be sure to print it in reverse



Step 5.

Adding your interfacing – See our blog on interfacing and the different types.

Pin each piece of fabric to the correct interfacing.

Iron/press your interfacing to the wrong side of the fabric pieces



I have left the interfacing visible for tutorial purposes only. If some of the interfacing is visible, just trim it off.

**NOTE:** 1. Remember the "bobbles/bumpy" side of the interfacing, must face the wrong side of the fabric.

2. Remember that any design you use will produce an appliqué that is a 'mirror image' of the template you started with. If you'd like your appliqué to appear the same as the template, be sure to print it in reverse.

Step 6.

Decide where you are placing your applique design – in the corner; in the centre or one in each corner.

Then before stitching place your layers on top of each other, to see what it will look like. This is where, I take out my extra décor – buttons, beads, lace etc and experiment.



### Step 7. Tearaway stabiliser – optional

Tearaway Stabiliser or 'freezer paper' can be used to help stabilise your applique and your fabric. This is placed on the wrong side of your fabric and when you have finished your project you remove the stabiliser by tearing it away. Placing the stabiliser will stop the puckering, but when I am creating, I pin and press each stage/layer. You can also tack or baste each stage. Again you need to experiment, find what suits you and feels comfortable, what looks the best. When using embroidery/hand stitches, you can use your embroidery loop/ring, to keep your applique in place.

### Step 8. - Stitching your applique either by hand or machine.

If you are using a sewing machine, always create a stitch sampler. Use a scrap piece of fabric to decide the width, length and type of stitch and once decided write the width and length numbers next to the preferred stitch.



These are the more commonly used machine stitches - zig-zag or satin stitch (tight zig-zag), straight stitch and "free-motion" stitching which uses the straight stitch. I love playing and using my "fancy" stitches on my machine. Again, experiment and create. Find your way and your creation.

You can use your applique foot, but I use my standard sewing foot.

The same applies to hand/embroidery stitches. The most commonly used embroidery hand stitch is Blanket stitch for the edging, but again there are a variety of embroidery stitches.

Generally two or more strands of embroidery thread/floss are used to create your embroidery stitches.

Use one or all of the different types of stitches. Use different threads. I love using various stitches and thread colours – machine and hand. You need to create your way and what you are comfortable with.

Then when you are ready, place and pin the base/bottom layers first. Stitch – hand or machine – in place.

Add your next layers as the tutorial guides you. Press after each layer.

Layer 1 – I decided to add lace at the base.

Layer 2 – Stitch the mushroom stem.

Layer 3 – Stitch the mushroom head.

Layer 4 – Add your final décor.



See our free patterns – how to make cushion covers, tote bag etc. Visit – [www.rosamaycrafts](http://www.rosamaycrafts)

Your applique is complete.

## **BASIC TIPS**

1. Using nature to inspire you - Create your own applique template.

CREATING A MUSHROOM TEMPLATE FOR APPLIQUE. This mushroom template is a 2 piece template - mushroom top/head and the mushroom stem

Step 1.

Take a mushroom from your fridge or garden – make sure it is not poisonous.

Take a photo of it lying sideways

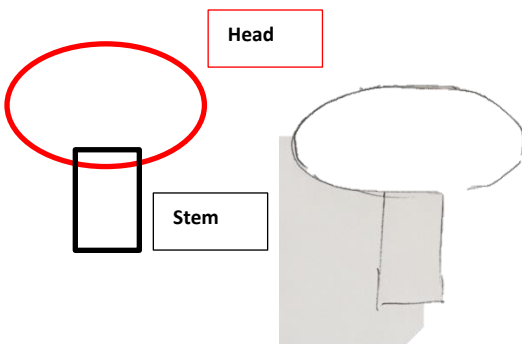


As you can see it is made up of two shapes – oval and rectangle.



Step 2.

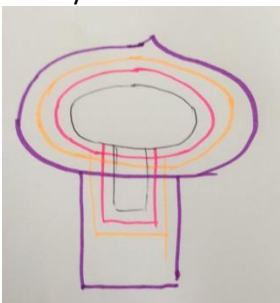
Draw this onto your piece of paper. Remember it does not need to be perfect.



The mushroom shape can be adapted and changed. Play around on a scrap piece of paper.

Step 3.

Once you have decide on your shape and size.



To make your template bigger, draw lines around the outline. I have used various colours to show you the different sizes. I have also left the drawing as freehand. Don't try and make too perfect.

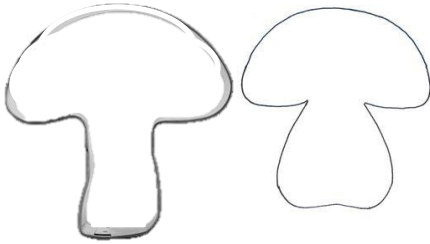
Step 4.

Once you have decide on your shape and size.



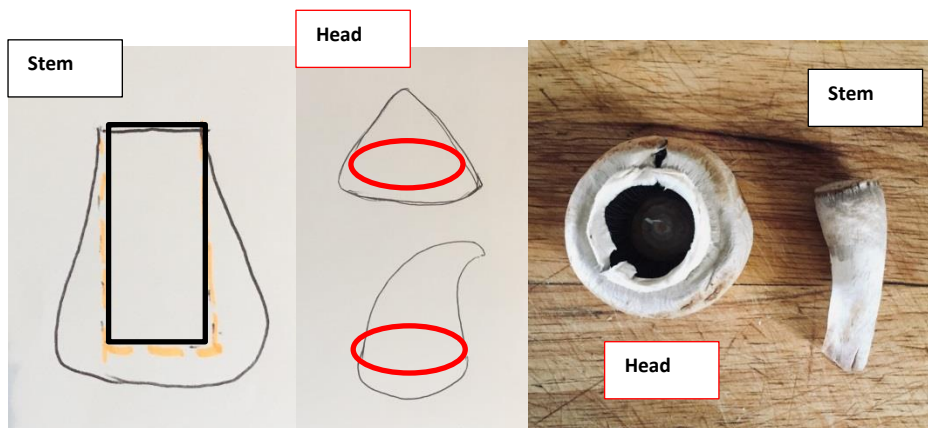
To make your template bigger, draw lines around the outline. I have used various colours to show you the different sizes. I have also left the drawing as freehand. Don't try and make too perfect.

Trace the outline.



Step 5.

As this is a two piece applique, we will need to create a mushroom head and stem. From your main shape – step 4. Trace the mushroom head. Then trace the mushroom stem, but add an extra ½ to ¾ cm to the top, as this will go under the head, when completing your pattern.



Step 6.

Trace your piece onto tracing paper, brown paper or baking paper.

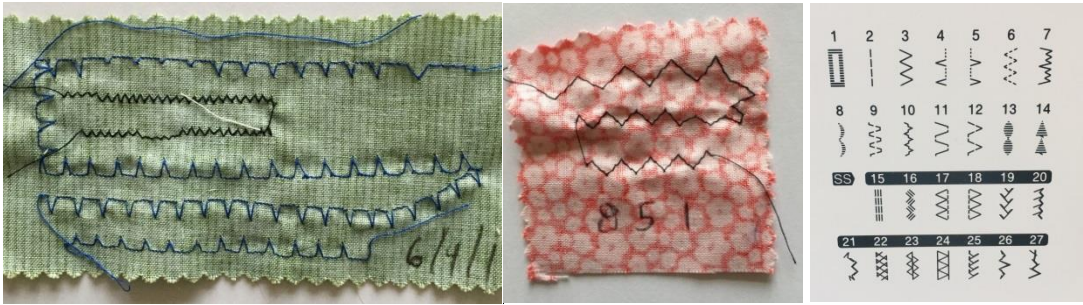
Step 7.

Trace your applique pieces on to your fabric or felt. Cut out and add to your project.

Here are some other examples – leaves. One template piece and the veins are created by straight stitch.



2. If you are using a sewing machine, always create a stitch sampler. Use a scrap piece of fabric to decide the width, length and type of stitch and once decided write the width and length numbers next to the preferred stitch.



3. See our blog on “Types of Interfacing”.
4. Cotton, quilting and felt are the best fabrics to start with, as a beginner.
5. There are 3 main types of applique:
  - machine applique – an embroidery machine is commonly used here.
  - hand applique – as in the title, using hand stitches, such as blanket stitch.
  - fused applique – this uses a fusible interfacing.
6. Washing Instructions – in order to protect your applique project – turn your creation inside out and place in an old cushion/pillow cover. This slows down the fraying process and will also protect buttons, beads etc from getting caught and damage.
7. As with all crafting, have fun creating.

PROPERTY OF ROSA MAY CRAFTS.



Visit our website – [www.rosamaycrafts](http://www.rosamaycrafts) for more FREE TIPS, TRICKS AND PATTERNS.