

## IN-THE-HOOP GLASSES/PHONE

### CASE

BY LINDEE GOODALL

**A**fter creating the [ITH Snappy Eyeglasses case](#), I had many requests for a simpler version that could be completed in one hooping with no additional sewing. Also many people asked for glasses designs that were filled in rather than just outlined and some wanted them surrounded by stipple quilting and others with a grid. If you were one of those people, your wish is my command because you can find all that and more in this new set.



Make a padded pouch to protect your glasses or cell phone!

In-the-hoop projects don't get much simpler than this—no zippers, no special hardware, no extra stitching!

This project is a quick and easy pouch for glasses, phone, or just an extra pocket! Depending on the fabrics and designs you choose, they're suitable for men, women, or kids of any age. Fully lined with no exposed seams, you can turn out a professional looking project with very little investment in time or supplies.

This project can either be done as a single hoop project with a plain back or a two-step process with an embellished back. The one hoop method is obviously the quickest and easiest, while the two step one offers more options for customizing.

You can use the quilting motifs as either decorative by inserting a contrasting thread or as a more functional, background or textural element by using a matching thread. The less decorative quilting patterns such as the basic grid, channel, or stipple make a good background for adding in your own design elements. Simply insert those elements after the quilting motif either in your software or at your machine.

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To see how to do that, check out this YouTube video that shows how to edit a redwork design into a new border and insert it into a plain version of an ITH zippered bag. [How to Extract & Edit a Design in Embrilliance Enthusi-  
ast.](#)

These eyeglass cases stitch up quite quickly, require only small bits of fabric and batting or foam. No extra notions such as zippers or hardware are needed so they're very economical. Chances are you have the supplies on hand right now. They're a great project for craft bazaars or your gift stash or for yourself. Make one to match other in-the-hoop projects.

Using the embellished back you can easily use different fabrics for the lining, such as a soft flannel. Because of the additional seam across the top on the back panel with this version, you can also add a small loop or hook, which can then be attached to a belt loop, belt or purse loop.



**Figure 1.** I'll show you how to add an optional loop and swivel hook to make your case into an add-on pocket.

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This case was designed to be quick and easy to whip up with no additional closures. However, it would be a simple matter to add a snap closure either into the top of the case or add a small strip into the embellished top back seam with a snap that could fold over to the front.

I used [Warm and Natural batting](#) and [Bosal In-R-Form](#) (non-fusible foam) for my samples. The batting makes a softer case that's easier to turn right side out; the foam makes a more structured version that's a little more difficult to turn. Heavier fabrics with foam will make the turning more difficult but not impossible. Also, with the foam, because it is puffier, you'll need to take care that you don't stitch in little tucks when stitching outer seams.

With a project this small, the quilting is not really needed to secure any filling; it's purely decorative. That means you could easily swap in any design of your choosing in place of the ones I've included or even skip it altogether. Also, due to the construction technique used, any designs won't sew through to the lining so the inside of your pouch will still be pristine.

## THREAD COLORS

These designs have more thread colors than you'll probably use. The colors are there to force stops and to add flexibility. With extra color changes, it's easy to skip, delete, or insert new elements between color blocks.

On the samples below, I've stitched the entire project in just 1 color. The glasses outlines can be skipped or the fill could be skipped and replaced with inks, as I did with the [Snappy Glasses](#) cases.



**Figure 2.** Some designs have multiple colors in the decorative areas while others only have one. All three of these bags were each sewn all the way through in one color.

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Any stitches that are for construction are either double or triple stitched, so polyester embroidery thread is just fine.

## SKILL LEVEL

- Basic embroidery skills; this project is super simple and requires no sewing skills

## WHAT YOU'LL LEARN

- How to create a lined open bag entirely in one hooping
- Some simple customizing options



**Figure 3.** A basic version is shown to the right of the enhanced version. The pair on the left is the front view; the pair on the right is a back view. The plain back is a folded fabric with a foam insert and requires no other preparation. The enhanced version will require two hoopings plus some extra work to add in the loop.

## WHAT'S INCLUDED IN THIS SET

- 17 multi-format embroidery designs: 11 front panels and 6 back panels
- Printable patterns
- Templates for the appliqué case for hand or machine cutting
- Applique Basics tutorial PDF
- These instructions to complete the project

Refer to the included pattern guide for cutting fabrics.

The designs in this collection are all one size so you can mix and match any combination of front and back as desired. Having one size also makes it easier to cut fabrics in batches and have them work with any pouch in this set.



*Individual designs will only have what's needed to complete that single project.*

## NOTE ABOUT LINKS

In some cases, links to external web sites are included for more information on a technique or product. All the links were active at the time of writing but web sites can vanish and pages can change. If a link is no longer working, please let me know and then just use a search tool to see if the information can be found elsewhere.



*Please read through all instructions before starting your project!*



*Resizing not recommended.*

## NOTE ABOUT CUTTING

If you're using foam, it can be cut to the inner seam line to reduce bulk in the seams and conserve foam. The design will stitch a straight stitch tack down after the placement on the embellished panels so you can also cut back the excess foam on those sections. Batting may be cut larger and trimmed out after the tack down stitch.

## OTHER NOTES

A pattern guide is included for cutting fabrics. There are lines marking the horizontal and vertical center. If you plan to match these, clip into the seam allowances about 1/8" to match the stitched guides. On the first placement stitching, there are corresponding stitched "notches." Use these to help you place fabrics that you want to center or match front to back.

Since the front and back are constructed slightly differently, separate designs are included for the back. The collection includes all available pieces for a customizable mix and match. Individuals will only include a coordinated front and back.

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## SUPPLIES

- Small bits of fabric or pick up some fat quarters. Use the included patterns as a guide for fabric requirements.
- Thin cotton batting like [Warm and Natural](#) or foam such as [Bosal In-R-Form Unique Sew In Foam Stabilizer](#)
- Light weight cutaway ([Sulky Soft N Sheer](#), [No Show Mesh](#), etc.). The stabilizer in this project will be hidden inside. A soft cutaway will provide a good foundation for the quilting.
- Coordinating embroidery thread. Polyester embroidery thread is recommended over rayon for any seam stitching during the bag construction.
- Decorative thread of your choice for the quilting area
- Cellophane tape or other tape that won't gum up the needle when sewn through (I used painter's tape for the photos)
- [Fusible web for appliqué](#) for the rose

## EQUIPMENT

- Embroidery machine with a 5x7" or 130x180mm minimum sewing field
- Steam iron
- [Appliqué tacking iron or mini iron](#) for appliqué version

## OPTIONAL

- Narrow ribbon or constructed self-fabric strip for loop, handle, or strap
- [Hardware for the optional loop: D-ring, swivel hook or other](#). Thinner less bulky hardware is best.
- Small strip of fusible web for appliqué for closing the opening (or hand stitch with needle and thread)
- TESA (temporary embroidery spray adhesive)
- Duct tape to secure stabilizer
- Starch
- Interfacing - you may wish to interface your fabrics; I didn't on any of these samples.

## INSTRUCTIONS



*You may want to raise your presser foot height slightly to avoid "tripping" over various pieces and causing them to shift.*

## GETTING STARTED

### 1. Print the corresponding pattern.

Full size patterns are included. When printing, make sure to print at actual size. Guides are included on the pattern to permit pattern matching and fussy cutting.

### 2. Cut any appliqué pieces needed for your project.

The Appliqué Rose case is the only design in this set that has appliqués. This design is digitized for precut pieces. If you're not familiar with how to cut and prepare appliqué pieces for machine embroidered appliqué, please refer to the Applique Basics tutorial.

### 3. Select and cut all your fabric and batting or foam pieces.



**Figure 4.** I've chosen a thinner cotton for my lining pieces to reduce bulk.

**Plain back:** With the back panel folded in half, wrong sides together matching the short ends, insert the trimmed batting or foam between the folded fabric. If you want to use a different lining fabric without embellishing just stitch together along the top edge and treat as one piece.

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**Figure 5.** If you're using the plain back, fold the fabric in half, wrong sides together and insert cut-to-size batting or foam between the layers.



*Pay attention if your fabric has any directional prints!*

Apply any interfacing if desired. Starch any pieces, if desired, and make sure they are pressed smooth a flat.

#### **4. Optional: Loop Handle.**

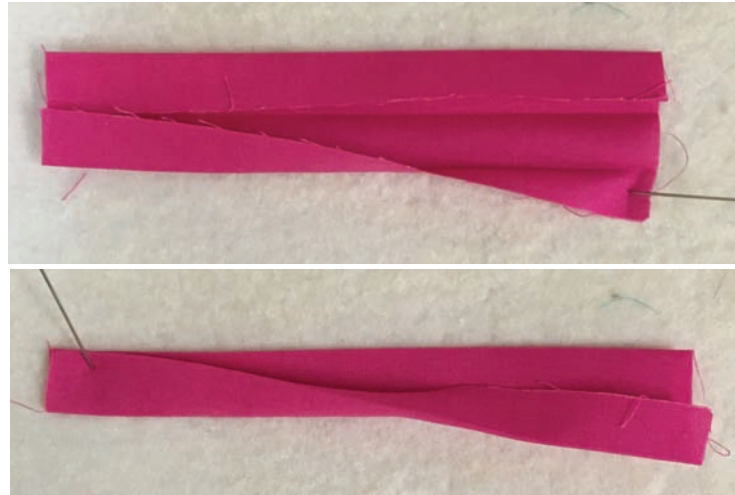
Make a self-fabric loop or cut a length of ribbon or strapping for a short handle loop/strap or hanging loop with hardware. To determine the length, decide how long the loop should be, for example 2", double that and add ½" for the seam allowance.

For a self fabric handle on the sample project, I cut a strip 3" wide.

If you're using hardware, determine the width by measuring the opening. Your fabric width needs to be slightly less than four times that measurement to fill out the space.

Press the strip in half lengthwise. Then open the strip and press each long edge matching the raw edge to the center fold. Refold the piece and press well. Once again, starch is your friend!





**Figure 6.** To make a no turn strap, press the strip in half along its length, then press each raw edge into the crease. The result is 4 layers of fabric with the raw edges folded in. Edge stitch along both long edges starting with the open side.

Top stitch 1/8" from the edges starting on the side with the two folded edges.

If you're adding hardware, slide it on now, making sure the prettiest side of your top stitching will be on the outside when folded in half. Top stitch across the loop near the hardware to hold it in place.

## EMBROIDERY

For these step-by-steps, I've used a matching embellished back, created a small loop from matching fabric, and added a swivel hook just so you can see how you might customize your own version. I've also chosen a different fabric for the lining to reduce the bulky turn with multiple layers of denim along with the foam. I've taken the time to carefully position the back when placing it to match the sides and bottom as closely as possible. For the other samples, I've used only one fabric for each case and used the plain back method.

If you're using the plain back, just skip forward to the Front Panel and Assembly.

Although the designs are relatively low stitch count, don't underestimate the time it takes to complete them. You'll need to remove the hoop and place pieces multiple times. Take your time and place pieces carefully for a successful result.

### 1. Hoop stabilizer securely between the rings of your hoop.

Smaller hoops are generally more secure than larger ones with long straight sides. If your stabilizer slips during stitching, you'll experience problems. Take any necessary measures to prevent slippage.

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One way is with duct tape. Tear strips in half lengthwise, apply to the back of the stabilizer along the hoop edges and wrap up and around the sides of the hoop. (I do this a lot! It's better to be safe than sorry.)



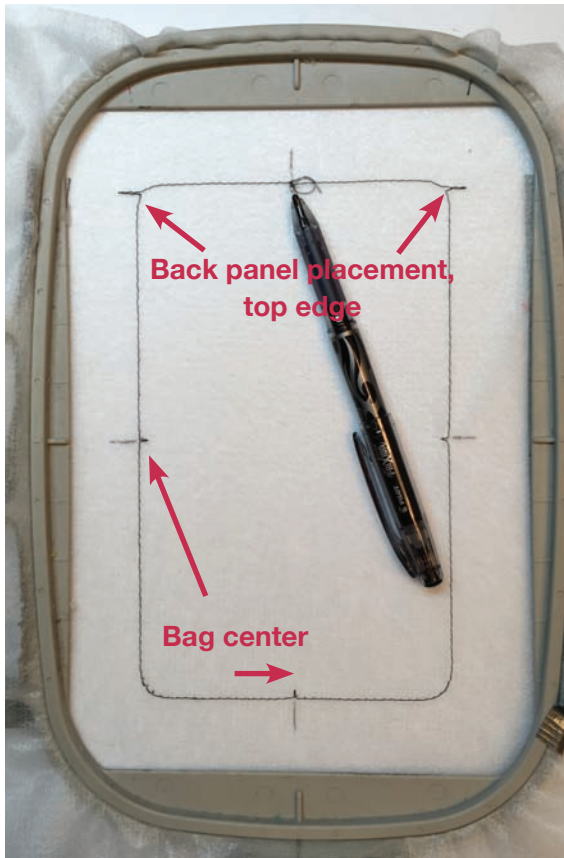
Figure 7. I like to use duct tape to prevent slippage.

## 2. Stitch color 1 for placement lines.

I've stitched color 1 in black for visibility for the photos. Normally I would use the same color that I'll use for the decorative stitching. Although there are many color stops in this design, you can usually get by with just 1 or 2 colors.

Color 1 sews directly onto the stabilizer only. Small indents mark the horizontal and vertical centers for assisting with precise placement of patterned fabrics and aligning embellished back panels.

The two registration marks at the top and bottom indicate the overall bag center and the center of the main body area. These can help you if you choose to edit in another design.



**Figure 8.** The placement stitching outlines the position for the foam or batting. Additional “notches” mark centering guides and back panel placement. Extend lines onto stabilizer with a marker if you need to refer to them later since they’ll be covered when you place the foam.

Once you place your fabrics, this guides will no longer be visible so if you plan to use them, simply extend them onto the stabilizer with a pen. This stabilizer will be removed later so any marker will work.

### 3. Place the batting or foam.

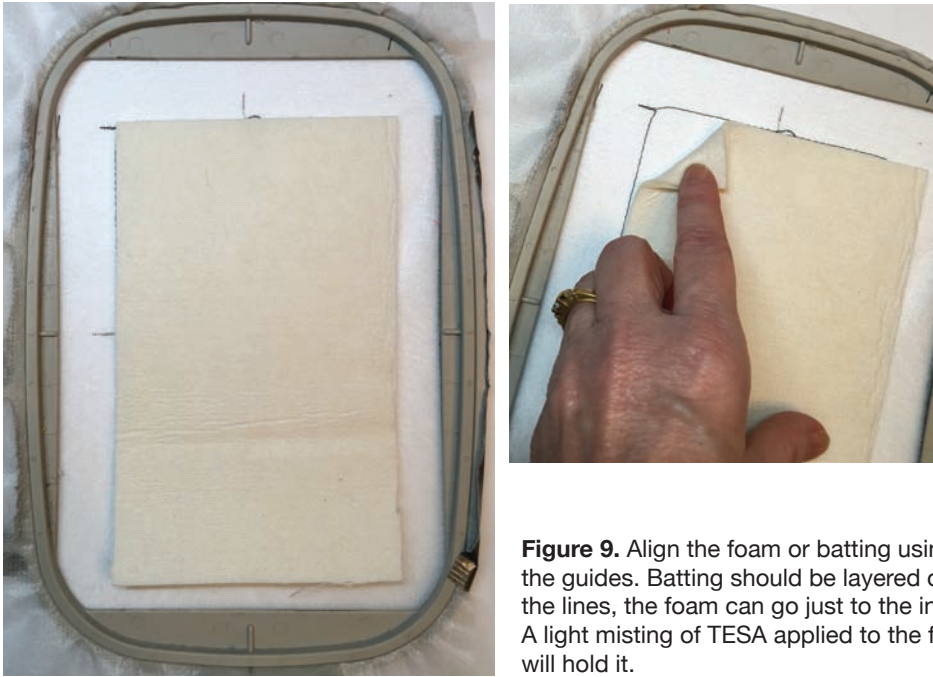
When using foam, I like to align it just below the top edge of the placement stitching and along one long edge. For the long edge, I match the side where the turn opening will be. (Right side for front panel, left side for the back.)

This will let the lining turn to the inside better. A thin batting can be placed over the placement guide.



*If you align the foam within the stitching line, the tack down stitching that comes next can cause it to shift. Simply advance through the stitches until you get to where the stitching will occur on the foam.*

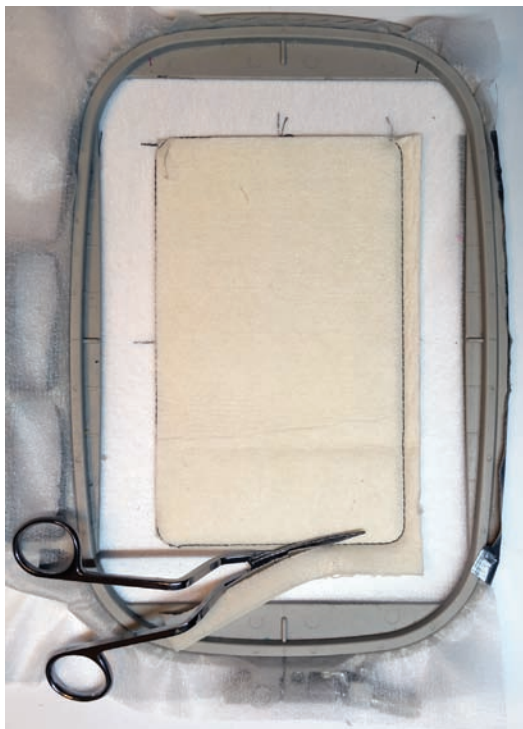
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**Figure 9.** Align the foam or batting using the guides. Batting should be layered over the lines, the foam can go just to the inside. A light misting of TESA applied to the foam will hold it.

### 4. Stitch the tack down line.

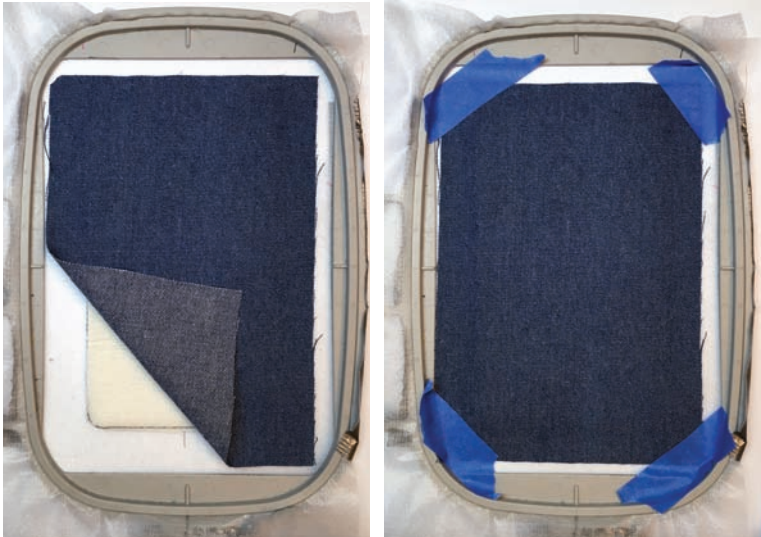
Remove hoop from machine and trim off excess foam or batting.



**Figure 10.** Trim off any excess batting or foam up to the stitching line.

## 5. Place the outside fabric.

Layer the outside piece, face up over the foam making sure the fabric extends evenly beyond the previously stitched lines. Match any guides as desired. Secure edges with tape. A mist of TESA applied to the back of the fabric can help hold it in place.



**Figure 11.** Layer the outer fabric, right side up, centering it over the foam. Tape in place.

## 6. Stitch the decorative area. (Refer to the color sequences. Most backs are only 1 color; fronts may have multiple.)



**Figure 12.** Outer panel stitched to stabilizer with the decorative stitching completed.

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## 7. OPTIONAL: Add loop.

This design was not planned for any loops or handles but you can still sneak one in at this point. Position the loop ends matching the raw edges of the bag. On this sample, my loop is way longer than I need so the raw ends are sticking out quite a bit, which gives me more area to tape.

Normally I like to stay stitch any handles or loops within the seam allowance and just to the outside of the seam but this design doesn't include that. One way to do that is to take the hoop to a another sewing machine and stitch it. Or, you can take advantage of your machine's navigation features and advance the needle to the loop and stitch it down.



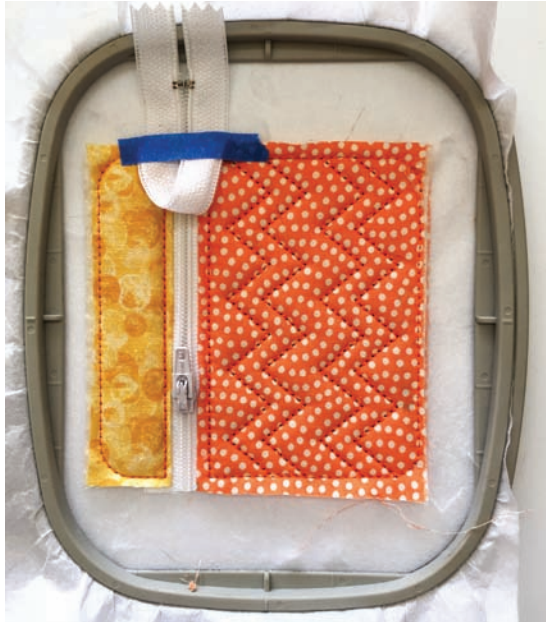
**Figure 13.** Attach loop by advancing the needle through the last color change until it's over the loop and then stitch.

I had to be very careful on this project because my loop is 8 layers of denim and very thick. Raising the presser foot helps and stitching slowly also helps. I didn't break a needle but I highly recommend not working yourself into a corner like this!



*Note: This loop is denim, and very thick. I recommend using ribbon or strapping for a more manageable version. Because of the thickness, I raised my presser foot height a bit. Then I advanced the needle to just over the edge of the loop, stitched across it and off the side, then advanced again until the needle was once again over the loop and stitched back across. This "stay stitched" my loop albeit on the seam line. Then I placed my fabric and repeated this step, stitching just over the loop area. Then I backed up to the beginning of the color, stitched to the loop, advanced over it, stitched the other side until it go back to the loop, advanced the needle and stitched the first bit again. Not all machines let you adjust the presser foot height and if yours can't use a thinner loop material. The way my loop is made, I effectively have 8 layers of denim stacked up. Alternatively, the loop ends could be placed side-by-side to reduce bulk.*

Alternatively, you can position the strap ends side by side instead of stacked. This will spread out the loop thickness. If you do this, then you could just tape the loop and advance to the next step and skip the jockeying around to stay stitch..



**Figure 14.** Excess zipper tape can make an interesting loop. By offsetting the placement of the ends, bulk is reduced.

Back up to the beginning of this color before attaching the lining.

### **8. Place and stitch the back lining.**

Before the last color stop, layer the lining fabric face down. The last color will attach it to the top edge of the back panel.

I had to do a bit of futzing here because of the loop thickness. When you have a really thick loop, the presser foot can't glide over it even with another layer of fabric. In that case, you'll need to stitch by section, stopping the machine and stepping it up or down as needed. Use a thinner loop (or none!) and you'll be fine.

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**Figure 15.** Lining is placed right side down and will be stitched just across the top.

### 9. Finishing the back panel.

Remove from panel from the hoop, trim off the stabilizer next to the stitching. Fold the lining over to the back of the panel. Press. Optional: Edge stitch along top edge.



**Figure 16.** Back stitched and ready to attach to the front panel.

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## FRONT PANEL AND ASSEMBLY

If you worked through the steps for the embellished back, the front is very similar:

1. Follow steps 1-6 for the embellished back.
2. Placement guides for back.

After the decorative area is stitched, a pair of placement marks will be sewn near the top. These can be stitched in any color that is visible enough for placement. They won't show on the final project.



**Figure 17.** Front panel is stitched and the placement guides indicate where to align the upper edge of the back panel. The back panel must be at or below these guides to avoid stitching the back closed.

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## 3. Place back panel, right side down on top of hoop.

Match top (folded or finished) edge of back panel to these guides, right side down.



**Figure 18.** These designs are digitized so that the back panel can be matched to the front. Match the points on corners of the squares when placing your back panel. If there's no pattern for matching, align the top edge of the back panel with the placement guides.

Make sure the foam edges of the back match the foam edges of the hooped front panel.

Tape over top edge to avoid the foot tripping on it. Tape in place securely.

Sew the next color to tack in place. Remove tape.



*If you've used foam instead of batting, it will compress while stitching, causing the fabric to become slack, which could stitch a small tuck into the fabric. Watch this step carefully and if you notice any slackness building up, stop the machine and rearrange the fabric. I didn't have this problem with the batting.*



*If you've added a loop or hardware, orient it as shown for this step.*

## 4. Secure loop if you've added one.

If you've added a loop or hardware, fold it down within the bag area and secure with tape. For this project, I'll take care to stop the machine before it returns to center so it won't hit the hardware.



**Figure 19.** Tape down loop and hardware to keep it out of the final seam.

## 5. Attaching lining.

Place lining face down on top and tape in place. Stitch all the way around leaving an opening to turn on side. This final seam is a double pass so polyester embroidery thread is fine. I've made 13 of these cases so far and this double pass held up through some vigorous turning right side out.

Once again watch for potential slackness and tucks.



*Once you turn the project, the lining will not be perfectly smooth because turning will cause the inside area to “shrink” but not the lining. If you've added hardware or loops as I've done here, it will magnify the problem.*

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## FINISHING

1. Remove from the project from the hoop and trim off the stabilizer next to the stitching. Trim off excess seam allowance leaving wider seam allowance at opening. Press back the seam extensions at the turning point.



*After stitching up a batch of these, I discovered if I use small piece of fusible web to fuse the seam allowance on the back of the front panel down, I get a better result.*



**Figure 20.** Seam extensions at the turn opening have been pressed back. The thicker side has been fused down with fusible tape to make a neater edge.



**Figure 21.** This is where the bag was turned. Especially when using foam, it tends to push out. Pressing and fusing down the seam allowances before turning can prevent this. Of course, once your case is in use, it won't really be noticeable.

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2. Turn right side out, close opening. This can be done by hand stitching or with fusible web.



**Figure 22.** Hand stitch or fuse the turn opening closed after the initial turn.

3. Turn right side out again. Press. Voila! Your project is done!



**Figure 23.** Finished bag is perfect for sunglasses or your phone. (Shown: iPhone 6.)

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**Figure 24.** Bottom (left) and side (above) views of bag show how pattern matches.

### MAKE ANOTHER ONE!

Once you've made your first bag, you'll have the process down and you can start experimenting. Try swapping in other designs for the quilting used. Use different fabrics.

Although I didn't do any piecing in the hoop on these to keep them fast a simple, you could easily use pre-pieced fabrics—they'd look great with the stipple version.



**Figure 25.** Examples of other designs in this set.

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**Figure 26.** The [ITH Snappy Glasses Cases](#) feature a “snap” closure using a metal carpenter’s tap and require more work than these simpler pocket type cases. Also, the color on the glasses in the snap bags comes from ink, paint, or colored pencils instead of thread. You could easily adapt the glasses in this new series to do that by skipping past the fill or satin stitches. To learn more about the coloring process, see this blog post: [In-the-Hoop “Snap Bag” Glasses or Phone Case](#).

### GIVE IT A GO!

In-the-hoop projects are popular and can range from very simple to highly complex. These little bags are great for organizing small supplies, perfect for traveling, and make excellent gifts. You can make multiples using coordinating fabrics and hook them together when you need more organization or space.

Now that you’ve learned the basics, check out other, more advanced projects. Would you believe that this owl mini-reader bag can be made in the same size hoop we used for this project? Yes, it requires more hoopings, more steps, and more hand finishing, but your embroidery machine does most of the work! See: [Whoo’s Got Your Reader? Mini-Reader Owl Project](#).

[Check out all the in-the-hoop projects here.](#)

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**Figure 27.** These owl bags are other in-the-hoop projects that can be made in a 130 x 180mm hoop. [Who's Got Your Reader Mini Reader Owl Embroidery Project.](#)

## WANT TO LEARN MORE ABOUT MACHINE EMBROIDERY?

If you'd like to learn more about machine embroidery, check out my current classes on Craftsy. Use the links below to get 50% off on these classes:

- [Thread Savvy: Stitch Flawlessly with Any Thread](#)
- [20 Things Every Embroiderer Should Know](#)

Of course, I do continue to add free videos to my [YouTube channel](#) and write [new blog posts](#) on my website at [LindeeGEmbroidery.com](#).

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