

Design Muse: Pattern Repeat Hoodie



Hello gang! This is artist Caitlin here, popping in for a special tutorial inspired by my little girl, Olive! Working on embroidery designs, I've noticed that 4"x4" versions are perfect for toddler clothes. I wanted to create a cute back border design, that looked like a larger pattern on Olive's hoodie, and take the cuteness to a whole new level. She is wearing 2T clothes, and the size is just right for using 4"x4" embroidery designs. There are so many great [light-stitching designs](#) on Urban Threads that can be overlapped and collaged together to make a larger embroidered area, but the [kitty design](#) used in this tutorial is especially designed to overlap easily to create one long pattern.

So, to make this repeating pattern hoodie, you're going to need:

- Light-stitching embroidery design. This

Curious Kitties Collage works perfectly for creating a pattern, but you can create a similar effect with many different open, running stitch designs.

- Hoodie. This works great on toddler sizes, but could be used on any hoodie with enough repeats. (Or any item that needs a repeating border of embroidery!)
- Cutaway stabilizer -- a sheer mesh cutaway such as Sulky Soft 'n' Sheer or Floriani No Show Mesh is great with light-stitching designs like this one.
- Seam ripper
- Scissors and pins
- Temporary spray adhesive
- Printed template of the design, for placement ([here's how to print templates](#))
- Ruler
- Masking tape and pen



You can use your printed templates to eyeball the placement, but for a more precise effect, try the following alignment technique...



With a piece of masking tape, mark a horizontal line across the back of the hoodie where you would like the center of your designs to fall. Then take a ruler, and mark a straight line over the tape. I used the bottom edge of the hoodie as a general guide for the horizontal line.

Using your template, mark the center of the middle embroidery design on the tape. For the 3.86" version of the design, measure and mark 3 1/2 inches to the left, and then to the right of the center dot. These will be the center points for each design. The designs will overlap slightly at this distance and look great as a seamless pattern.

For the 4.84" version of the design, leave 4 1/2 inches between center points. For the 5.87" version of the design, leave 5 3/8 inches between center points.

Place a piece of tape vertically over each spot your mark, and draw a perpendicular line up from each center, like shown. A ruler helps keep these lines straight!

These will give you the guides of where to align the fabric in your embroidery hoop, and to keep everything even as the fabric shifts around during sewing and hooping.





Spray a large piece of sheer mesh cutaway stabilizer, and stick it to the back of the whole area to be sewn. Hoop up the fabric and stabilizer tightly together, so that the hoop is centered over that center cross.

Once everything is set up, tear away the middle tape markers and stitch your first design.

With the first design done, I then hooped up my left side, removed the tape, and stitched the design again.

A small amount of embroidery will overlap, and that's great! You can double check the placement of the design using your printed template as you go if you like.



Finally, hoop up the right side, remove the tape, and sew! You now have an repeating border of adorable kitties.

If you're working on a larger hoodie or other item, just keep repeating this overlap pattern until you get as many repeats as you want. Three is all that's needed on a small hoodie like this, but an adult might need 5 or more.

You can add an extra touch of cuteness by sewing some small kitties onto the front pockets! Each kitty from this design is also available individually, for convenience.

Use your seam ripper to open the seams on the top and bottom of the pockets. Leave the stitching on the side attached to the zipper.





Place your printed template of your single kitty design on the pocket.

Cut a large square of the sheer mesh cutaway stabilizer big enough to cover your hoop, with some extra around the edges. Then spray the back of your pocket liberally with temporary spray adhesive, and smooth it onto the center of your stabilizer square. You can also use pins to keep it in place -- just make sure they won't be in the way of the embroidery.

Carefully hoop the pocket and stabilizer, keeping the zipper out of the way of the design. It's OK if most of the pocket is be floating in the hoop -- this light design will still work great.

You can do this on both hoodie pockets if you wish!

When all your stitching is done, pin the pockets back onto the front of the hoodie, and stitch the top and bottom edges back in place with a sewing machine or by hand. Don't sew over the pocket opening!



And your hoodie is complete!

Some cute little kitty accents dress up the front...

And your fun repeating kitty design creates a fantastic colorful pattern on the back!



And really, who isn't just thrilled with lots of rainbow kitties? Little model Olive loves her new look!