Quilt Label

You may be looking at that design and thinking, "Wow! What a cool Victorian label thing-y! But what do I do with it?"

You would be right, it is a cool Victorian label. Thingy. And you would also be right to wonder... what are some good ways of using it? How good of you to ask!

Labels, by their nature, tend to contain words. Text not already included in designs is an issue we don't come across here at Urban Threads very often, so I'm going to show you a few awesome ways to add custom text to your label, and then a few neat ways you can use it!
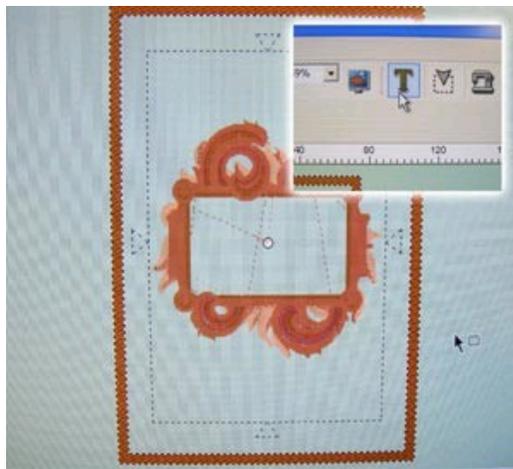
Let's start with the most obvious choice ... adding machine embroidery text to a machine embroidery design!
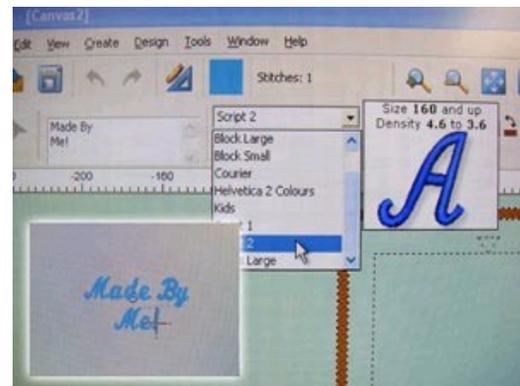
Some embroidery machines and software come with the ability to add lettering to designs.

Almost all machine embroidery software is going to come with some built-in embroidery fonts. Adding text as part of the file lets you ensure it all stitches out together, perfectly centered, without having to re-hoop or re-stitch.

First, load up your design, and center it in your hoop. Next, find the text tool. Mine was in the upper right, marked by a big "T". Click this button to add text to the design file.

Most software works a lot like using a Word doc. Mine had a small area for typing my chosen text (there at the left) as well as a few font choices and sizes. You can also find alignment buttons to center your words if you so choose. Type away whatever you wish to put in your label ... your name, who made your craft, the date ... whatever!
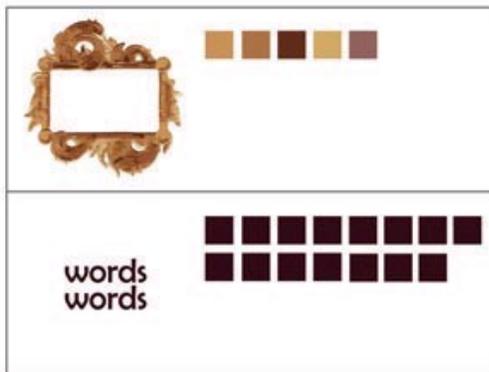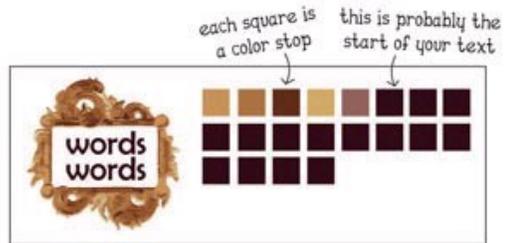
Center your text inside your design. If you used your in-software fonts, your text will probably all be part of the same color and stop, so you can just send your design off to be stitched…

However, what if you're using ready-made alphabet designs from somewhere else (we'll work on it, I promise!) you might need a few extra steps to simplify the sewing process.

If you're loading your alphabet letter by letter, here are a few things to consider. When loading designs in, you'll probably have to select merge or paste to add each letter. Once your letters are loaded, drag them into place. Often your screen will have a grid on it that will help you align each letter. There are also tools and functions that will help you perfectly center your design.
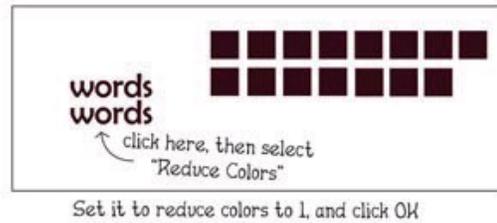
One last step that will help with sewing is to put all your letters on the same color stop, so your machine can stitch merrily away uninterrupted. I made some little illustrations to help show you how. They and the instructions below are based on how to do this in Embird – other embroidery software ought to be able to accomplish the same thing.

Right now each letter probably has its own color stop, with each color represented as a square. You should see a lot of squares next to each other that are the same color. This is probably the start of your text, as indicated.

each square is a color stop   this is probably the start of your text

Right click on the first square of your alphabet (the start of your text) and click "Split Before Color". That will change your image to something like this, will all the squares of your text separate from the rest.

Click that little image of the letters, and then select "Reduce Colors". In the menu that pops up, set it to reduce colors to one. This will make all your letters on one stop, and sew together!

words words   click here, then select "Reduce Colors"

Set it to reduce colors to 1, and click OK

So, now whether you used your in software text, or imported an alphabet, you can set your machine to sewing! Your text and your label will all stitch out together.

Perfectly stitched out! Yay!

But wait, that's not the only way you can add fun text to a neat-o label like this...

Use a permanent fabric marker to write your own messages in your label…

Or embroider it by hand! Of course, you could embroider the whole thing by hand, but if you just want the text to have a nice handmade touch, go for it! You could even print your label on printable fabric and stitch the label over it. All kinds of possibilities!

So what do you put the label on, and what do you put in it? All sorts of things! Of course, the most obvious is a quilt label, often on the back of a finished quilt, with the name of the maker and the date.

As a label for products you make. Add your store name, or contact info!

On crafts that just need some fun text and a fun frame!

Even on a bear!

I'm totally kidding. Bears would be impossible to hoop.

Paying attention now? Good. Now go embroider your label on whatever your heart desires! And if your heart does desire to embroider on dangerous animals, do send us a photo...

Mix and match your favorite techniques to find the perfect way to label your wares! PatchworkPottery shows how to make a long ribbon of little labels using an iron-on transfer. futuregirl demonstrates making a cute hand-embroidered label out of felt. And Chubby Mummy's tutorial will guide you in printing and sewing a label worthy of your quilted masterpiece.