

Love is Love



February as well as being LGBTQ+ history month is also International Embroidery month and of course Valentine's Day is on 14th February. What better way to celebrate all the 'love' than with an embroidered heart emblazoned tote bag. This is a really easy make as the heart panel is backstitched to the bag after it has been embroidered, but does take time to get all the 'white space' filled. There is a heart motif download to decorate in any way you choose and you could use fabric paints for a quicker make. I've used the same heart motif for the box frames.

Materials:

- Fabric tote bag
- Printable canvas, printer, black permanent marker, ruler
- *Love is Love* download
- Coloured double knit yarn, large eye pointed sewing needle, sharp scissors

Instructions:



1. Print the heart download onto printable fabric of your choice. I used printable canvas which meant I could embroider onto it without having to use a sewing hoop as it stayed firm and flat. Alternatively trace the pattern onto normal fabric or even straight onto the bag.
2. Colour 'love is love' with a black permanent marker to make the words 'pop'. Draw lines across for the rainbow look. Trim the canvas into a square to make it easier to handle.
3. Fully cover the heart with double knit yarn in satin stitch to get the coverage needed, adding quick dry glue under some of the wider satin stitch areas to keep flat.
4. When the heart is fully embroidered place the square onto the front of a fabric tote bag and backstitch around with a contrasting colour yarn. Cut away the excess fabric with very sharp pointed scissors. I then backstitched round the heart again to cover any fabric left showing after trimming.



Use the template for box frames. I had the right sized heart shaped picture frame insert to fit over the template and glued this to the printed canvas before attaching sequins/butterflies.

For the sequin encrusted version above left glue rows of different coloured sequins, using tweezers as a helping hand to place down, with tacky PVA. Do this in stages leaving rows to dry before adding others (they kept moving until the glue set). It would be much easier to use sequin trim where all the sequins are sewn together but I was using up left over individual sequins. I originally added black sequins for the letters but felt it did not show up well enough so went back over with white sequins.

For the butterfly version above right I punched out butterflies from paint colour charts I no longer needed (you could modify by using coloured copy paper). The charts gave a good selection of colours and was a good way to recycle them. Glue in rows with PVA glue. Squeeze a blob of glue

onto a non-stick surface, pick up each butterfly with tweezers (wings together) and swipe through the glue, stick down. I found the rows remained straighter by adding the next butterfly the other way up on alternate rows. So many have been added it is actually hard to see what they are until close inspection. I found out a collection of butterflies is called a kaleidoscope which seemed appropriate for this months rainbow makes.

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