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5 Ways to Trace Your Designs Onto Fabric

Lots of people work from photographs or a pencil drawing and this is one of the questions I get a lot. How to trace designs onto fabric.

Here are 5 simple ways you can quickly trace your designs onto fabric.

1. Lightbox

To trace a paper drawing, place it on a light box, place the fabric on top of it and start to trace. Light boxes are available for sale in any regular art supplies store or in the art department of your local store. You could also create your own. Or alternatively, if you have a clear acrylic extension table for your sewing machine you could put a battery operated light under it and use it as a lightbox.

2. A Brightly Lit Window

If using a light box is not an option for you, Just place the fabric on top of the drawing then tape it to a brightly lit window. You can now go ahead and start to *trace onto fabric*.

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3. Overhead Projectors

These are available in office supplies stores. The way they work is you print your drawing or sketch onto what are called transparencies. (scan drawing into your computer if you don't already have it on your computer). Then you project the image on your transparency onto a display screen. Pin your fabric on top of the display screen and then *trace onto fabric*.

4. Digital Projectors

These work somewhat like overhead projectors. They are more modern, though. Digital projectors eliminate the need for transparencies. They connect directly to your computer. They can be used to project multimedia (photos, scanned drawings, videos, PowerPoints, games etc.). I use one of these. I love how easy they are to use and that it works directly off the images on my computer.

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5. Tear Away Stabilizers

All the options mentioned above work best when the design you're going to *trace onto* light colored fabric. However, for dark colored fabrics, it will be difficult to see through using a light source as in the options above. In this case, you can draw onto a tear away stabilizer, place the stabilizer on top of your fabric and stitch through. Afterward, tear the stabilizer away. Read more about stitching through stabilizers here. Golden Threads has a good product you can use to trace onto fabric.

TAKE THE NEXT STEP: Improve Your Techniques

Hey there!! I'm Clara! I'm an artist - a creator. I create art and I create content (e-books, videos, & articles) to help textile artists spark their creativity, develop new techniques and turn their passions into viable businesses.

This pdf you've just read has covered how to trace your designs onto fabric. I've got more articles in my resource library on thread sketching techniques. There's so much you can learn to make doing what you love easy. To get access to more techniques…

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