

Decoration

Bring Some Bling to Headwear

How to embellish caps with sequins.

By Tonia Cook Kimbrough

Want headwear with style? Look for sparkly embellishments. Rhinestones, glitter ink or even faux-sequined heat-transfers are all great choices. But when it comes to a classic option, many clients seek the signature look of sequined embroidery – an advanced decorating technique that really makes hats stand out from the crowd.

When you plan to stitch sequins into a logo, consider the artwork. “Designs need to support the sequin shapes and size to look clean,” says Drew Coufal, owner of Sew & Sew Embroidery, adding that fixed shapes limit application to some degree.

For that reason, he recommends fine details and small elements in a logo be stitched with standard embroidery, leaving the main elements for sequined application.

To keep the process cleaner and more exact, don’t use more than one sequin size. “Most shops with a sequin device tend to run only one size sequin,” Coufal says, “due to the complexity involved with changing over the sequin device mechanics to drive a different size sequin.” Indeed, Coufal suggests steering clients toward single sequins not just to make the embroidery process easier, but also to ensure that the end-result is an imprint that’s cleaner and clearer.

Round sequins come in sizes from 3 mm to 7 mm or more, and each one can have a different interior hole diameter. In addi-

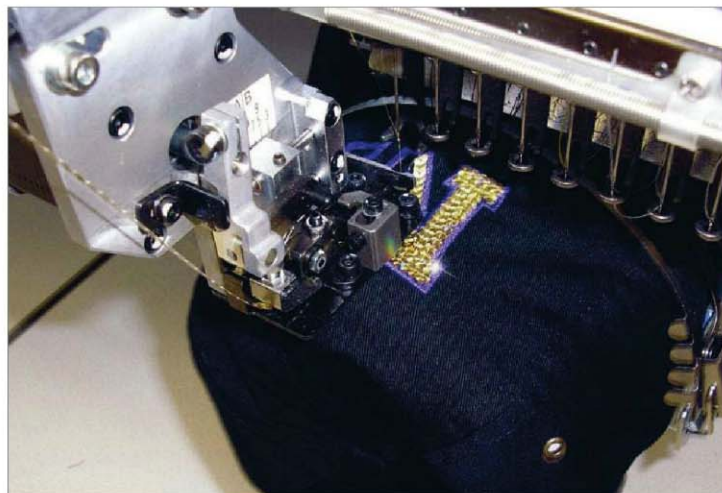
tion, there are various sequin shapes and coatings to choose from. “With all of the variables and complexity in the process, most shops prefer a specific style and even brand of sequin that they know will run well with their machine and sequin device,” Coufal says.

Working with clients that want some sequin treatment for an upcoming order? Keep these tips from Coufal in mind when you (or your decorator) digitize a logo for sequin embellishment and prepare for the run:

Pay close attention to the starting tie-down stitches. If these are not digitized well, the sequins may not get attached on the first few sequin drops as the machine starts up. Plus, you should make sure your decorator knows how the software codes will affect the sequin device. For example, will the sequin device retract to the up position to perform a trim or stay in the sewing field? (The machine will run faster if sequin devices do not need to retract to trim.)

Also, a good decorator will plan for how the sequin device feeds the reels of sequins; some equipment allows for the sequins to be fed from any angle, while other machines limit angles from which the sequins can be fed.

Then, you have to consider the type of fixing stitch to be used. There are dozens of fixing stitch types, ranging from star-shape tack-downs to simple running stitch-style tack-



Sequined embroidery is a classic way to add some sparkle to headwear. As evidenced by Sew & Sew Embroidery, it’s smart to use sequins for large areas and not for fine details.



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downs; each has its own set of parameters such as the overlap of the sequin shape, the sequin size/diameter, positioning, spacing, feeding direction and orientation.

When running any sequin logo, it’s vital to check your hoop size, design size and

sequin foot carefully, allowing for the device to freely move and retract to avoid costly frame contact. It’s important to not only know what to look for when using sequins, but also to stay in close contact with the decorator performing the work for you.