

MAY 2017: Raw Edge Appliqué

This month we will be learning how to perform raw edge appliqué technique. This employs a fusible web that is heat activated. Two common brands are Heat n Bond and Steam A Seam. While adhesives have been available since prehistoric times, chemical adhesives were developed and have been manipulated only since the early 1900s. Now there are spray on, iron on, and tape on adhesives for use with fabric. There are stabilizers, soluble stabilizer's, tear away stabilizer's, water-soluble thread, etc. Fusible web is a particular kind of bonding material that needs to be heated in order to cause the bonding. This comes in sheets of various thickness, usually with a paper backing. The heat melts the adhesive and glues the fusible sheet to the quilt fabric. The shape of the object wanted can be cut out of the fabric, the paper backing peeled off, and then the piece of fabric put on a background fabric and ironed in place.

This is an incredible help to someone who does appliqué, because there is no need for pins to hold the shape in place to stitch it down. Partly because of fusible web, what's called raw edge appliqué has become very popular. Quilters don't bother with the tedious work of turning under every edge of the flower or whatever it may be, and then sewing it down. They simply sew around the cut edge of the fused shape. This serves the same purpose as turning the edge, which is to prevent the raw edge of the fabric from fraying.

There are five pieces to the songbird this month. However, the head and body may be cut as one. Also, the central section of the wing can be deleted if you desire.

1. Prep your background fabric. It needs to be ironed flat.
2. Cut pieces of your fusible web the approximate size of your birds' body parts.
3. Iron your pieces of web to the appropriate small pieces of fabric.
4. When cool, draw the outline of the body part on the paper IN REVERSE (mirror image).
5. Cut out the individual pieces.
6. Arrange them on the background the way you want the final picture to appear.
7. Iron the individual pieces the way you have arranged them. Layer them carefully.
8. Stitch around all raw edges using a machine stitch of your choice.
9. Stitch in the legs and eye. Use any embellishments for these and the rest of your block that you desire.

