

IN-THE-HOOP MINI-ZIPS



Figure 1. Four mini-zip pouches designed for 4x4 hoops. Quilted and padded, they are perfect for protecting USB sticks or coralling pocket change. Original projects by Lindee Goodall.

Remember those soft plastic oval coin purses with the slit down the front that you squeeze to open? I saw one recently and had a flash back to one I had as a kid that was a lady-bug. That memory inspired me to create this in-the-hoop zippered version that will work in a small 100 x 100mm (4" x 4") sewing field. Also included are a soccer ball, a plainly quilted round mini zip and a square one. Add a small design or monogram to these more basic ones or sew in a sumptuous fabric and embellish with beads or other trim.

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Each project is fully quilted and uses an appliqué technique for finished seams on the inside. Precision templates are including for a professional result. Instructions are basically the same for all three; the ladybug version just has an extra appliqué step on the front piece that is skipped for the others.

In-the-hoop projects are popular because they require no additional sewing. A zipper can be inserted perfectly (and painlessly!). In-the-hoop projects, while not difficult, do take attention to detail. These little mini-zips have some rather unconventional steps when compared to standard embroidery. Take your time to read and follow each step. Once you've made one, you can breeze through the next one. If you cut and place your pieces accurately and you'll have a professional looking result!

Featured Techniques

- In-the-Hoop Zipper
- Machine embroidered appliqué
- Programmed quilting



Please read all instructions before beginning!

ABBREVIATIONS

- **TESA** - Temporary Embroidery Spray Adhesive
- **ITH** - In-the-Hoop
- **WSS** - Water soluble stabilizer

SUPPLIES

General

- ☐ 6" (or longer) zipper to coordinate with fabrics
- ☐ Small bits of fabric from your stash or purchase fat quarters
- ☐ Low loft batting, fleece, or just flannel for dimension (I used Warm & Natural)
- ☐ 3/8" wide ribbon for loop, 3" long or make a fabric tube for a matching loop
- ☐ Embroidery thread to coordinate with fabric
- ☐ Coordinating bobbin thread
- ☐ Tape (cellophane, double stick embroidery tape, and sew-through wash-away)
- ☐ TESA
- ☐ Appliqué tacking iron
- ☐ Soft, lightweight (non-stiffening) fusible web (I used Steam-A-Seam II Lite)

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Stabilizers

- ❑ Hoopings 1 - 3: No show fusible mesh cutaway
- ❑ Fourth hooping: Either a cleanly tearing crisp tearaway or water soluble fiber based wash-away
- ❑ Fusible tearaway for printing templates
- ❑ Scraps of water soluble to hold batting in place for front pieces



Using fusible fusible products and tapes reduces the need for TESAs. If you don't have a fusible product, use TESA sparingly. Your machine will thank you!

Optional

- ❑ Narrow ribbon to embellish zipper pull, 3-4" long
- ❑ Beads or small buttons for eyes

ABOUT THE DESIGNS

The two round mini zips are exactly the same size and their templates are the same. The lady-bug has identical front pieces; they are just mirrored. For the other mini zips, all the fabric front template pairs are identical, the stitching is not; be sure to use the correct embroidery design for each side.

These designs have multiple color stops to facilitate the various processes and offer design flexibility to choose colors that better coordinate with your fabric selections. Individual pieces are quilted (both sides visible on back section) via the embroidery machine and you may wish to choose your bobbin threads accordingly. Even if you sew the entire design in the same thread, do not set your machine to sew single color or it won't stop when needed.

Select a thread color that coordinates with your project—in most cases you can use the same color for all the color stops of both the zipper and the lining. If you are sewing on a multi-needle machine, please be aware and program your color changes accordingly.

Because these designs use precision templates, resizing the designs is not recommended.

Ladybug Mini-Zip

- lgp00501 - Back
- lgp00502 - Right Side
- lgp00503 - Left Side (mirrored version of lgp00502)
- lgp00504 - Zipper

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Soccer Ball Mini-Zip

- lgp00505 - Back
- lgp00506 - Right Side
- lgp00506 - Left Side
- lgp00508 - Zipper

Quilted Round Mini-Zip

- lgp00509 - Back
- lgp00510 - Right Side
- lgp00511 - Left Side
- Uses same zipper design as the soccer ball

Quilted Square Mini-Zip

- lgp00512 - Back
- lgp00513 - Right Side
- lgp00514 - Left Side
- lgp00515 - Zipper



Figure 25. Consider using a specialty thread in your project for the quilting. This one used Sulky 30 wt. Blendable cotton thread.

PRELIMINARIES

1. Print templates making sure they are printed at actual size. This project is digitized for precut appliqué pieces.
2. Press all fabrics and starch if desired. Press zipper tape if it is not smooth and flat.
3. Cut out fabrics and batting using provided templates. Each piece is labeled. “Lining” means the fabric will end up on the inside; “outside” means the fabric will end up on the outside. All mini-zips in this collection use the same rectangular pieces, which are repeated on each template page. **The larger square piece is the outside of the back piece while the narrow rectangles are the lining pieces for the front sections.**

You’ll notice that some pieces are shaped to the design and others are rectangles. The shaped pieces are to be cut precisely. The rectangles offer a more generous shape for the steps involving trimming. Batting pieces are cut smaller to minimize seam bulk. These designs were digitized and tested with a low loft batting intended.

All right and left front templates are identical and are provided for ease in cutting. Print the desired template page twice to have all the patterns required for all the necessary fabric and batting pieces.



Figure 2. It's helpful to organize all your pieces before beginning.

How to Appliqué with Templates

Here's my favorite method for working with precision templates:

1. Cut a piece of fusible tearaway to standard printer paper size and lightly fuse top and bottom edges only to paper.
2. Print templates **at actual size** onto tearaway side using an ink jet printer. (Or photocopy if you have a suitable copier that prints at true size.)
3. Peel off tearaway from carrier sheet. Cut template pieces apart to separate. Fuse to **front** of fabrics.
4. Recommended: For red wing area of ladybug, apply a soft lightweight fusible web to the back before cutting. Choose one that does not add any stiffness.
5. Cut fabric templates just barely to the outside edge of the printed guides. Cut batting templates just to the inside edge. Accuracy is important!
6. When ready to place during embroidery, remove printed template, and position. Fusible pieces are fused before stitching. Pieces that did not have fusible web are held in place with a light misting of TESA. Oversized rectangles may need no TESA and often stay placed as is.

If you cut your pieces accurately, they will match stitching placement lines.

In-the-Hoop Mini-Zips

FIRST HOOPING: BACK

This piece is quilted all the way through and both sides of the fabric will be visible when the project is unzipped. You may wish to use a matching or contrasting embroidery thread in the bobbin. If so, wind a bobbin for this hooping. Pay attention to the fabric placements. I like this approach because there's no exposed stabilizer within the design to remove.

1. Hoop fusible mesh cutaway **fusible side down** and sew placement guide. **(Color stop 1.)** Two guide lines will be stitched. The outer guide is for aligning fabrics, the inner guide is for placing batting
2. Remove hoop and **fuse wrong side of lining to bottom side of stabilizer** (underneath hoop, right side down) using the outer stitching line as the placement guide. To fuse, use an appliqué tacking iron from the **front side** of the hoop to avoid disturbing the tension.



Figure 3. Place precut lining face down. Position outer stitching lines to match, and fuse from front side.



Figure 4. Lining piece viewed from back of hoop.

3. Position precut batting shape within the inner stitching guide **on top** of the hoop. Using a piece that fits this placement guide will reduce bulk in the seams.



Figure 5. Place precut batting inside inner guides on top of stabilizer, then layer outer square for back on top.

4. Layer top fabric rectangle over outer most placement guide, return to machine, stitch down. **(Color stop 2.)**
5. Remove hoop and trim off excess fabric to stitching line.

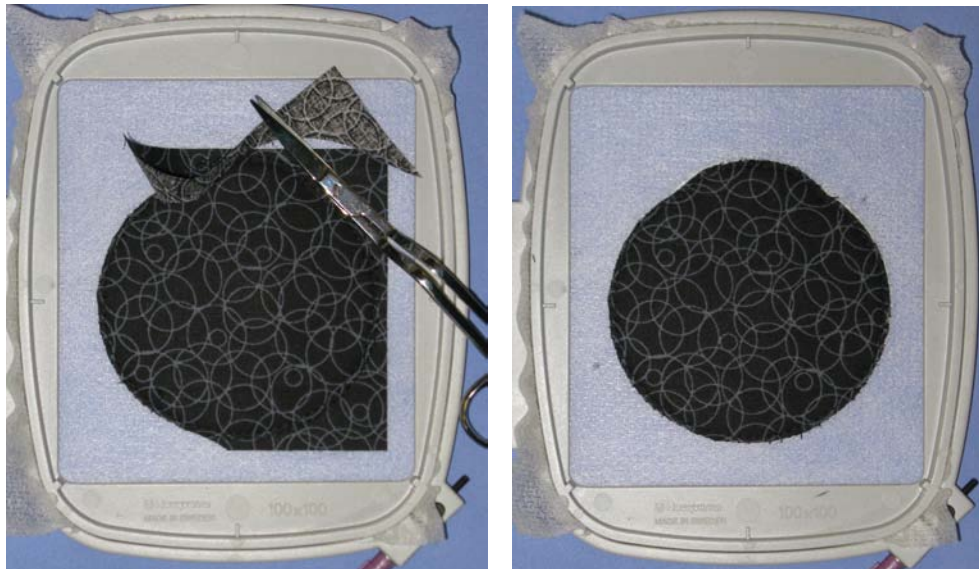


Figure 6. Trim off excess fabric right up to stitching line.

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6. Stitch zigzag overcasting around outside. **(Color stop 3.)**
7. Stitch next color (quilting or soccer ball pattern). **(Color stop 4.)**



Figure 7. Next color is the quilting or other decorative stitching. I've used purple thread in the needle and black bobbin thread. Left shows outside soccer ball piece, right is lining side.



If you wish to customize your project, merge in your own design here.

8. Remove from hoop, trim stabilizer as close as possible to stitching.

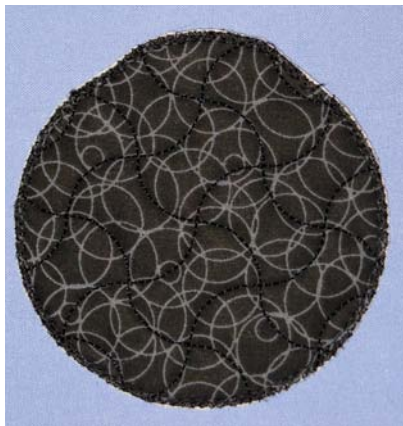


Figure 8. Trim away exposed stabilizer taking care not to cut stitching.

SECOND HOOPING: FRONT (RIGHT SIDE)

See separate instructions for ladybug. Color stop numbers in brackets are for ladybug.

1. Hoop fusible mesh cutaway **fusible side up** and sew placement guide. **(Color stop 1.)** Two guide lines will be stitched. The outer guide is for aligning fabrics, the inner guide is for placing batting.
2. Place outer fabric over guides and fuse in place with tacking iron. Align batting **under the hoop** and positioning the batting within the designated guidelines. Hold the batting in place with a layer of stabilizer taped or pinned to the hooped stabilizer out of range of the stitching (beyond the rectangular placement stitches.) I use scraps of water soluble stabilizer for this. The stabilizer will keep the batting from going down the throat plate. Return hoop to machine. Sew **color stop 2** to tack down appliqué pieces to stabilizer.

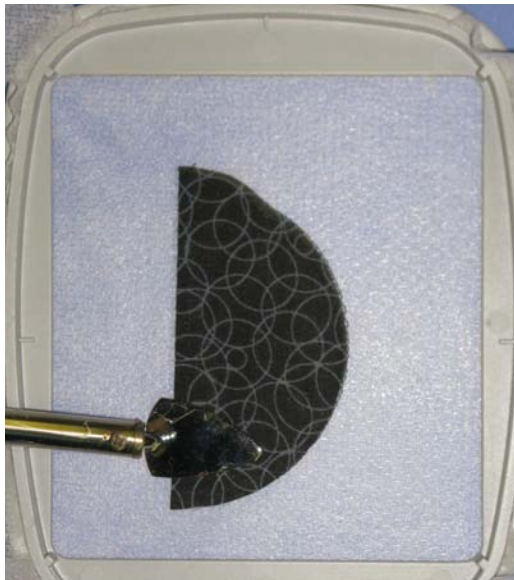


Figure 9. Place precut side within the outer stitching guides and fuse to stabilizer.



Figure 10. Place batting on back. Tape or pin a scrap of WSS to secure.

3. Sew decorative stitching. **(Color stop 3 [5].)**

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4. Place the lining fabric rectangle face down over the hooped design and stitch the seam. (Color stop 4 [6].)



Figure 11. Lining is stitched to left side of right hand side and right side of left hand side (usually the straight side).



Figure 12. Lining placed right side down and ready to stitch.

5. With an appliqué tacking iron, press lining open and towards seam allowance.



Figure 13. Stitch lining in place.



Figure 14. With tacking iron, press open towards seam allowance making sure fold is very flat.

6. Return hoop to machine and sew stay stitching. (**Color stop 5 [7].**)
7. Remove from hoop and trim off excess stabilizer as close as possible to the stitching. Trim or tear away water soluble in open areas over batting.
8. Turn lining to back and press along seam edge. To hold lining in place for last hooping, you can use some short pieces of strategically placed sew through wash-away tape or fusible web (make sure it won't add noticeable stiffness). I used small bits of Steam-A-Seam II Lite.

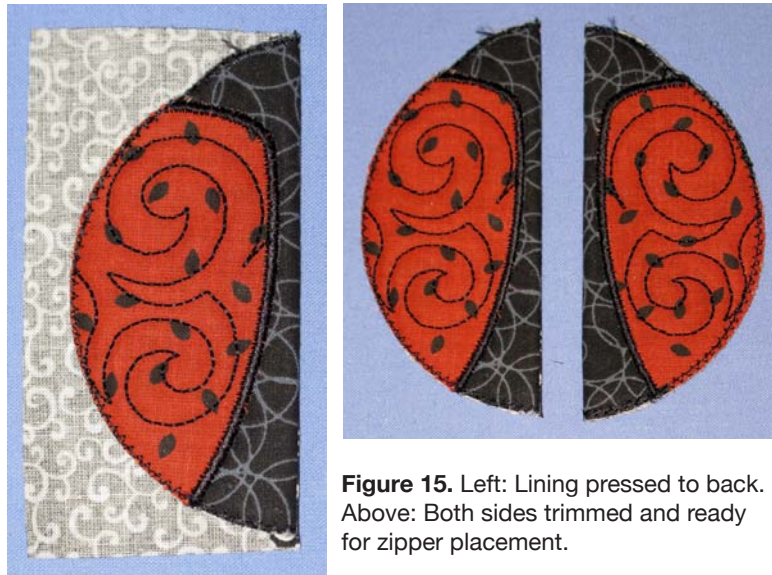


Figure 15. Left: Lining pressed to back. Above: Both sides trimmed and ready for zipper placement.

9. Trim seam allowances off excess lining fabric to match the top. Set aside.

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Ladybug

1. Follow steps 1 & 2 for front side.
2. Stitch placement guide for wing. (**Color stop 2.**) Place wing section taking care to align piece precisely along the curved edge on the inside of the body fabric.

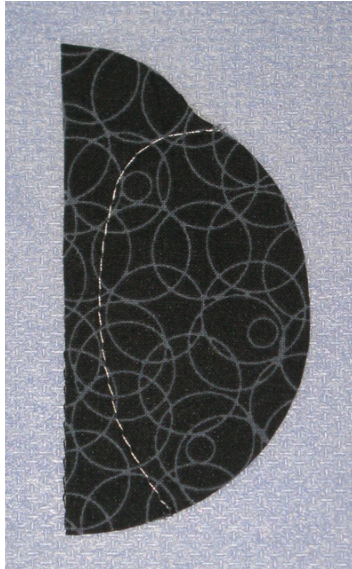


Figure 16. Place first piece within outer stitching guides. Then sew wing placement, shown here in white for visibility.



Figure 17. Place wing precisely and fuse.

3. Return to machine. Sew **color stop 3** to tack down appliqué pieces to stabilizer.
4. **Color 4** is the satin cover on the wing. You may wish to use a different color for this step.
5. Align batting **under the hoop** and positioning the batting within the designated guidelines. Hold the batting in place with a layer of stabilizer taped or pinned to the hooped stabilizer out of range of the stitching (beyond the rectangular placement stitches.) I use scraps of water soluble stabilizer for this. The stabilizer will keep the batting from going down the throat plate.
6. Continue with step 3 for front side to finish.

THIRD HOOPING: FRONT (LEFT SIDE)

Ladybug: If your machine has a mirror function, simply mirror this design for the other half, otherwise load the mirrored version of the design. Repeat steps for first half for this side.

Others: Load the left side design and sew, repeating the same steps for first half for this side.



If you have a larger hoop, both front sides can be combined and sewn in one hooping.

After this hooping, your front and back pieces are completed and are ready for final assembly.

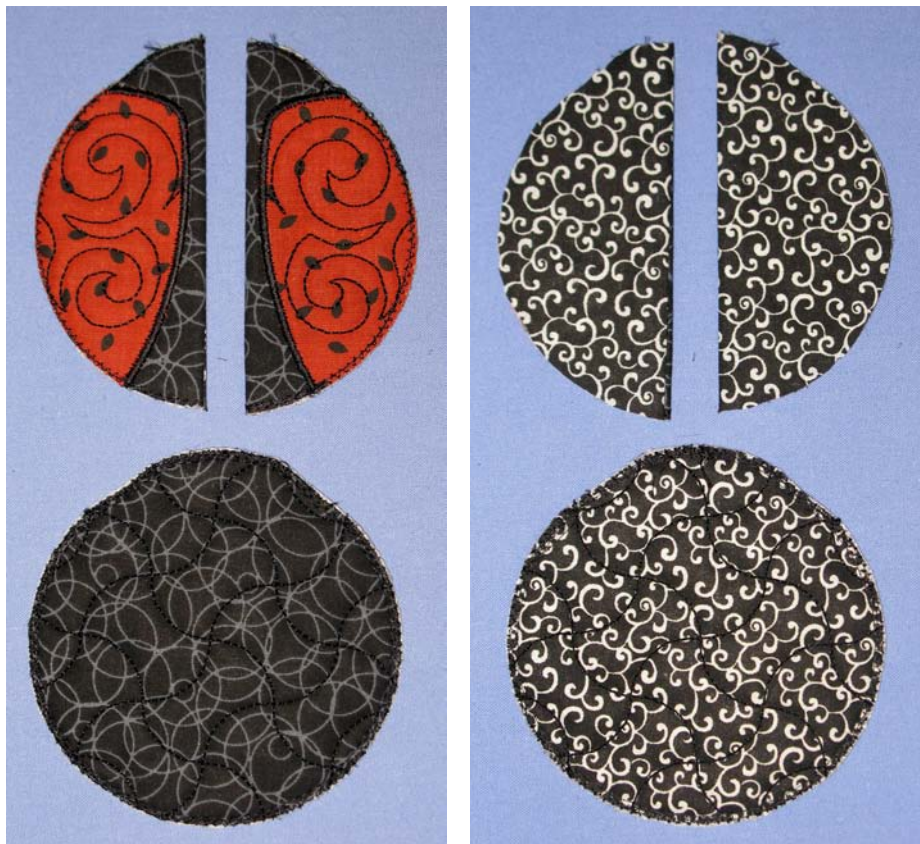


Figure 18. Ladybug fronts and back show outer on left and lining side on right, ready to finish with zipper.

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FOURTH HOOPING: ZIPPER AND FINAL ASSEMBLY

Although the inside is only partially visible, you may wish to use a matching bobbin thread. The last color change is a seam finish, which will be partially visible when opening the case.

1. Hoop stabilizer. Use either a crisp tearaway that can be torn away cleanly or use 2 layers of water soluble fiber.

2. Sew placement guide for zipper and front pieces. (**Color stop 1.**)

3. Position zipper and hold in place with tape. Place each front half, matching edges with the stitched guide on the stabilizer. The folded edge should be near the teeth. The top stitching will be placed along the guide on the zipper tape so make sure your front piece is between that guide and the zipper teeth. Hold in place with TESA or tape.

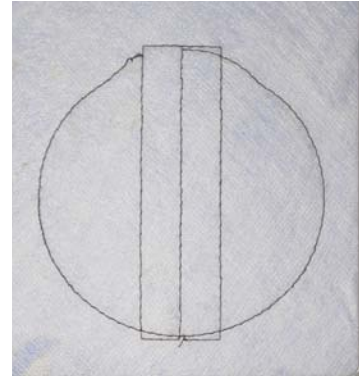


Figure 26. Sew placement guides.



Figure 19. Place zipper. Yellow stuff is double stick embroidery tape, which is very secure. Make sure it is placed out of the range of the needle!



Figure 20. Position front pieces within guides and secure in place before stitching.

4. Tack section to stabilizer and top stitch each side. (**Color stop 2.**)

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5. Test zipper to make sure it opens and closes and then **open it to about 3/4 open with the zipper tab flipped upward along zipper teeth.**



If you fail to open the zipper before stitching the ribbon and attaching the back, you will not be able to turn your project right side out or open the pouch!

6. Position ribbon or self-fabric tube for loop if using. Fold ribbon in half, wrong sides together, raw edges together. Align ribbon over zipper opening with raw edges to seam allowance and folded edge inside. Tape in place at for desired loop size. Stitch to secure. **(Color stop 3.)**



Figure 21. Check zipper and unzip with zipper tab up. Align ribbon adjusting the placement to your taste. Raw edges must at least meet the raw edges of your fabric.



Figure 22. Place back piece right side down aligning within stitching guides.

7. Position quilted back piece right sides together (right side down) matching the pieces and stitch guides. Hold in place with tape. (I removed tape as I got close to it.) Stitch seam and satin stitch the outer edge. **(Color stop 4.)**

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8. Remove from hoop. Remove stabilizer taking care to not tear any stitches. A seam ripper can be used to skim along next to the stitching. If you used a water-soluble product, a small paint brush dipped in hot water can dissolve any exposed remnants.



Figure 23. Ladybug ready to turn right side out.

9. Turn right side out.
10. If desired, add a small piece of ribbon to the zipper tab for a decorative pull. Add breads or buttons for eyes on ladybug.



Figure 24. Finished ladybug.

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