

## HEIRLOOM LACE ANGEL

### GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

**T**his lovely lace angel is a masterpiece of creativity and with a little bit of time, you can easily make one for yourself! The angel is approximately 8.5" tall and will stand without support or grace the top of your Christmas tree.

### SUPPLIES

- Designs
- Minimum 13x180mm (5x7") sewing field
- Embroidery thread (I prefer Rayon for lace but polyester, cotton, or even metallics can be used)
- Wash-Away stabilizer (non-woven fiber based)
- TESA (temporary embroidery spray adhesive, I prefer KK2000)
- Double-stick embroidery tape
- Sewing machine, hand needle and thread, or glue for final assembly
- Twist ties
- Styrofoam cone wrapped with plastic wrap (I trimmed off the top and bottom sections)
- Wire cookie cooling rack



Original design by Lindee Goodall



*Please read all instructions before beginning!*

# Heirloom Lace Angel

## THE DESIGNS

You'll notice this lace angel differs from many of the free-standing lace designs widely available on the internet these days. Those designs are often created by laying down a mesh of fill stitches as a fabric substitute and then stitching satin elements over the top. Such designs are quicker to digitize but they don't capture the elegance of the old time hand punched lace. This angel more closely reproduces that old-style look.

Don't let the open, airy look deceive you! This project is high stitch count—well over 200,000 total stitches depending on how you choose to make her. On the other hand, she has no jumps, no trims, and is sewn in only one color. So while the machine time is long, your interaction is minimal until assembly time. Plan on this as a two day project: one day to embroider, overnight to dry, and a little time the following day to assemble.

There are several versions of this design. If you have a machine with a 200x300 sewing field, you'll be able to sew the design in two pieces:

- Skirt (200x300 hoop) [lgp00102]
- Wings and head (200x200 hoop) [lgp00101]

If you have a 130x180mm sewing field, you'll have the following:

- Head (fits 100x100mm hoop) [lgp00103]
- Left wing (mirror for the right wing) [lgp00104]
- Interlocking skirt panel [lgp00105]
- Left skirt panel [lgp00106]
- Inside skirt panel [lgp00107]
- Right skirt panel [lgp00108]

I've provided two ways to create the skirt for these smaller sewing fields, which I'll cover in a bit.

## GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

The quality of your lace depends heavily on proper hooping and machine tensions. If the thread tensions are too tight, the stitches will be pulled more and sections may not align properly, underlay may be exposed, and your design may fall apart in areas when the stabilizer is removed. You can also experience these problems if the stabilizer slips in the hoop.



*Sometimes there are just a few errant stitches hanging out and these can be trimmed away with small thread snips.*

For optimum results, hoop two layers of wash-away in the hoop. Make sure both layers are smooth, taut and fully gripped between the rings of the hoop.



*Do not use a film type water soluble stabilizer. These stabilizers—even the very heavy ones—will perforate during stitching causing a loss of stability!*

For added security and slippage prevention, I used duct tape on the bottom side. Cut long strips of tape and rip them in half lengthwise. Tape along the edges of the stabilizer and wrap over the hoop. Use the smallest hoop that will accommodate each design. Slippage and push/pull problems are the greatest in the largest designs and in larger hoops (no matter the design size).



**Figure 1.** Duct tape on stabilizer. This hoop actually grips very well; the tape is just a little added security measure.



*Test your process by sewing the interlocking skirt panel in a 5x7 hoop. Rinse and dry and check for exposed underlay or any places that are not holding together. I have noticed that on some machines, the underlay is exposed on inner curves only in one area of the curve, say from 1:00 to 3:00 position. If the design is mirrored, the underlay is still exposed in the 1-3 o'clock position. This would indicate a machine issue.*

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After sewing, cut away stabilizer close to the design and then rinse out excess stabilizer in warm water. Simply rinse until you don't see any stabilizer remaining, the extra remaining stabilizer will help your angel keep her girlish figure.

Lay out wet lace on a thick towel and roll towel to soak up excess moisture. Do not wring the lace. I let my lace dry flat until just slight damp before shaping. Refer to shaping and assembly further on.



**Figure 2.** Lay the pieces out on a wire rack to speed drying time.

## SEWING INSTRUCTIONS

### Machines with 200x300mm sewing fields

Sew the skirt design in a 200x300 hoop and the wings and head design in a 200x200 hoop. It is particularly critical to hoop and stabilize securely for the skirt!



*If you want to adjust the angle or placement of the wings, you may want to use the separate pieces designed for the smaller sewing field.*

### Machines with 130x180mm (5x7") sewing fields

The easiest sewing method is to simply sew five of the interlocking panels. A second advantage is that this allows you to sew more manageable pieces and if you goof one up, you haven't messed up the entire skirt. This is also a good way to get a multi-colored skirt, if desired.

This was my original method and while it requires no multi-piece alignment during sewing, it is a little harder to assemble and results in a higher stitch count project. Furthermore, the interlocking connector buttons make the angel bulkier.

The second method is to sew the multi-piece skirt. Here you'll sew the left skirt panel first and trim away stabilizer closely. Next, load the inside skirt panel and sew to the applique stop. Align the first panel along the left side matching the connector stitches. Hold the first piece in place

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with double stick embroidery tape outside the range of the needle. You may wish to hold the connectors in place with a light mist of TESA.

When the second panel is finished, you'll repeat the process. Ultimately you will sew one left panel, three center panels, and finally the right panel. This process requires patience and attention to detail!

The wings and head are all sewn individually and are assembled afterwards.]



*You may find that you get significantly better results with the smaller pieces in smaller hoops than sewing the full size pieces in a large hoop. There is less distortion when sewing the smaller pieces. The trade off is your time. Only you can decide what works best for you.*

## SHAPING & ASSEMBLY

Before your angel dries into a stiff flat form, do a little shaping. Refer to the full-size versions to see how the pieces should look if you've sewn them in smaller segments.

You'll notice the skirt is designed so that it bells out slightly a little ways below the neck. The openings near the top allow the wings and head to fit into the body/skirt section. I found it easiest to form the skirt around a cut-off styrofoam cone. Interlock the connectors on the skirt back (connector will be on the inside of the skirt). Although the connectors are floppy and difficult to keep connected when damp, they will be quite sturdy when dry. I looped twist ties through the upper sections to shape the skirt as it dried.



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**Figure 3.** Angel skirt shaped over a cut off styrofoam cone covered with plastic wrap. Right, the back is connected via the interlocking buttons.

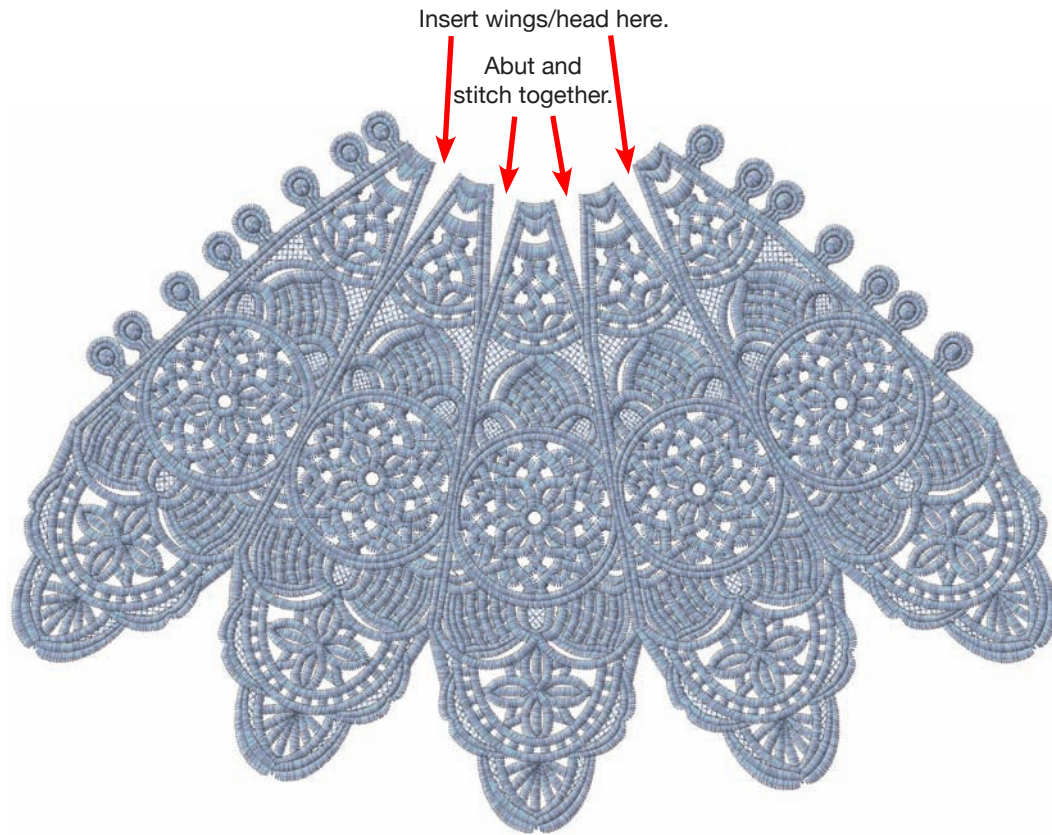
If you sewed the individual interlocking panels, it will be easier to form the skirt when the sections have dried. Then, interlock the connectors, slip it over the cone, and if shaping is necessary, mist with a water bottle until damp enough to form. Pins are also helpful for shaping and can be pushed easily into the styrofoam.



*If you find you are fighting with the connectors in the upper section of the skirt, just cut them off to match the full size skirt and hand sew. Alternatively, you can glue the connectors along the neck edge.*

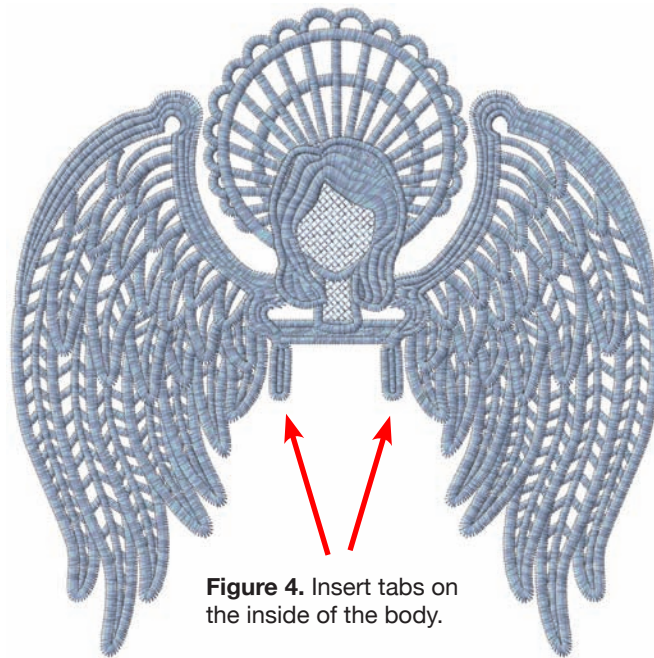
If you sewed skirt as one piece, once it is dry, the middle three upper sections can be sewn together. Leave the end segments open at the top to attach the wings. You can sew the segments together by abutting the edges and hand stitching or machine multi-step zigzag. I found it easier to do this stitching by hand.

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The head on the smaller version is attached to a “shoulder.” The wings are attached to the front side of the shoulder ends on the front and behind the hair on the angel. This design is to allow more support for the head to keep it from flopping over. These pieces can be attached with glue, hand stitches, or on the sewing machine. Before attaching, do a little fitting on your skirt piece to make sure you like the shape and placement.

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**Figure 4.** Insert tabs on the inside of the body.

The wings and head are set into the space between the first and second skirt panels on the left (as you look at the angel) and the fourth and fifth panels on the right. You may be able to just leave these panels open or you may need to add a few hand stitches to keep your angel together. If you can avoid the stitches, it will make it much easier to store your angel since she'll unfold to almost flat. For the sample shown on the first page, I simply set the wings into place—probably not a smart thing if I leave it within kitty reach!

## OTHER NOTES:

Although I sewed my angel in a traditional white, she would look lovely in other colors as well. I do not recommend trying to scale these designs to fit smaller sewing fields.

*Lindee G Embroidery*  
embroidery design & education  
<http://LindeeGEmbroidery.com>