

BERNINA®
Foot of the
Month



Clear Appliqué Foot 23

Embellished Handbag



Tired of plain, ordinary bags? I was, so I created this elegant evening bag to add some pizzazz to my wardrobe. Embellished with a variety of trims and beads, it is just the right size for a lipstick and comb, a few dollars, your driver's license, and even a pair of reading glasses.

In these directions, the bag features an original design which has been embellished with decorative braids, threads, and beads.

The finished bag (excluding piping) is 5" (12.5cm) wide at the top and 7" (17.5cm) at the base; the side gussets and base are 1" (2.5cm) wide. I chose to make my bag of black dupioni which will complement the many black dresses in my wardrobe. You may prefer navy or brown, pastels, or even white depending on when and where you plan to wear it.



Author and teacher Claire Shaeffer is internationally known for her detailed knowledge of fabrics and sewing techniques. Recently awarded the 2003 Lifetime Achievement Award by the Professional Association of Custom Clothiers (PACC), Claire is a frequent contributor to several magazines and is the author of 15 books, including Claire Shaeffer's Fabric Sewing Guide, Couture Sewing Techniques, and Sew Any Fabric. Claire teaches couture workshops in Palm Springs, CA.



BERNINA® sewing machine
Bulky Overlock Foot #12/12C
Clear Appliqué Foot #23
Patchwork (¼") Foot #37

Supplies

Needles, Sharp or Universal, 70/10 or 80/12
Super fine pins
Flower head pins
Rotary cutter and mat
Chalk pencil
White dressmaker's carbon
Lightweight cardboard
Point turner or stylus
Fine hand-sewing needle

½ yard silk dupioni, shantung, or taffeta
1¼ yards rayon piping
½ yard fusible interfacing
Matching thread (Mettler #50 cotton thread)
1 large snap

Assorted trims:

- ◇ QRI Designer Thread: Radiance—gold/black
- ◇ QRI Designer Thread: Radiance—gold
- ◇ YLI Metallic Ribbon Floss—gold
- ◇ Bead Gravy—Amber Chasseur
- ◇ Bead Gravy—Black Portobello

Assorted decorative threads:

- ◇ Mettler #40 metallic thread—gold
- ◇ Mettler #60 fine cotton thread—black
- ◇ Mettler #60 cotton embroidery thread—black

Fabric Selection

I chose to make my bag from black silk dupioni; this firmly woven fabric has good body without being thick or heavy, making it easy to embellish. Other crisp, firmly woven fabrics could also be used, such as taffeta, satin, or polished cotton.

Getting Started

There are many ways to proceed. For this design, I interfaced all sections except the lining by block-fusing the interfacing to the fabric before cutting. Then I cut the interfaced silk into smaller rectangles for the front, back, side gussets, and handle. After embellishing the front, I applied piping, gussets, and one end of the handle. After trimming away excess fabric at the edges, I finished assembling the bag.

Cutting & Fusing

From the silk and interfacing, cut a 17" x 18" (42.5cm x 45cm) rectangle. Block-fuse the two together following the manufacturer's directions.

Cut the following from the interfaced silk:

- ◇ front/back unit 10" x 18" (25cm x 45cm)
- ◇ 2 side panels 2" x 12" (5cm x 30cm)
- ◇ handle 3" x 12" (7.5cm x 30cm)

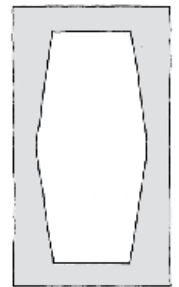
From the remaining silk, cut:

- ◇ front lining 9" x 9" (22.5cm x 22.5cm)
- ◇ back lining 9" x 10" (22.5cm x 25cm)

Using the pattern as a guide, cut one front/back section from lightweight cardboard.

Marking the Design

Place the cardboard pattern on the fabric and chalk-mark around it to mark the stitching lines.



To transfer the design to the fabric, I used white dressmaker's carbon and a stylus. A point turner or tracing wheel could also be used.

Place tracing paper, carbon side down, on right side of fabric. Place the couching design on top, locating it about 1" below the top seamline. Trace the design.

Stitching the Embellishment

Thread the sewing machine with metallic thread in the needle and fine cotton thread on the bobbin. Select a zigzag stitch with a length of 1mm and width of 1mm.

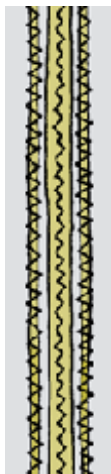
Attach Clear Applique Foot #23 to the sewing machine. The narrow groove in the sole of this foot provides a channel for the heavy threads, while the clear sole provides visibility, allowing precise placement of cords over the marked design lines.

I began my embellishing using the gold metallic Ribbon Floss, then stitched the threads on each side and around the outside edge.

Claire's Hint:

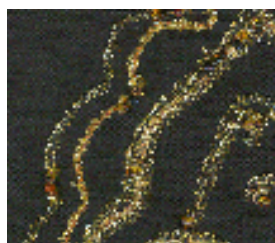
To be sure that the trim looks good at the ends, I begin and end with a 2" (5cm) tail. When finished, I trim away the excess.

Beginning at one end with a spot-tack, place the metallic Ribbon Floss under the presser foot. Using the traced design line as a guide, stitch the Ribbon Floss in place, couching it with short, narrow zigzag stitches. Stop at the other end; spot-tack to secure stitching.



Continuing with Applique Foot #23, apply black/gold Radiance metallic cord on each side of the braid, couching it in place with the same short, narrow zigzag stitch used for the metallic Ribbon Floss. Stitch Radiance cord around design perimeter.

To finish the embellishment, couch Radiance gold cord to the remaining unstitched line.



Claire's Hint:

To soften the "glitziness" of the gold cord, I used black embroidery thread (Mettler 30 wt cotton) in the needle.

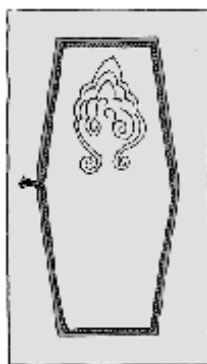
Beading the Embellishment

At this stage, the gold embellishment is very bold and flat. If you like this look, stop now. I decided to soften the look of the couched design with subtle glitter by placing small beads in a variety of shapes and colors on top of the braid and cord.

Thread a small hand-sewing needle with polyester thread, then couch the beads in place by hand.

Applying Piping

Thread sewing machine with #50 cotton thread (Mettler Quilting thread) in the needle and bobbin. Select a basting stitch, or adjust a straight stitch to a length of 5mm. Attach Bulky Overlock Foot #12/12C to the machine. Place the piping cord under the foot, in the groove. Move the needle position to the right so that the marked line on the foot is close to the cord.

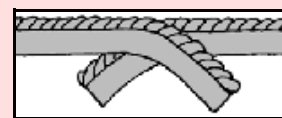


Pin piping to the right side of the front, aligning the chalk line with the stitching line on the piping. Baste piping in place, easing it around the corners.

Trim the seam allowances to 1/4" (6mm). Mark the fold lines at the bottom of the bag.

Claire's Hint:

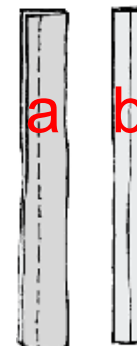
I began & ended the piping at the base of the bag. The ends of the piping extend into the seam allowance, and will be nearly invisible at the lower edge of the finished bag.



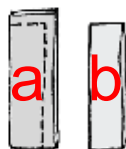
Stitching the Handles & Gussets

Attach Patchwork Foot #37 to the sewing machine. Return the needle to the center position.

To stitch the handle, fold the long strip in half lengthwise, right sides together. Stitch a 1/2" seam (a). Press the seam open. Turn tube right side out. Center the seam at the back of the tube (b) and press again.



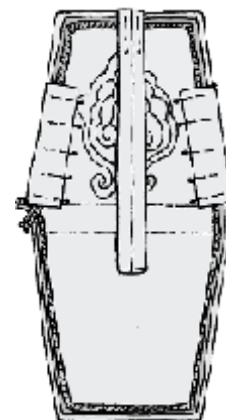
To stitch the side gussets, fold the strip horizontally, right sides together. Stitch a 1/2" seam at the bottom and one long edge (a). Press the seams open, then turn right side out; press again (b).



Applying the Handle & Gussets

Begin with the front of the handbag and one end of the handle, right sides together. Center the handle at the top of the bag. Pin in place.

Place the unstitched side of the gusset on the front, aligning the gusset seam with the fold line at the base of the bag; pin in place. Pin remaining gusset in place.



Attach the Bulky Overlock Foot #12/12C to sewing machine. Place bag under the presser foot, wrong side up. the needle position to the right so that the marked line on the foot is aligned with the previous stitching. Sew the handle and gussets in place, using the previous stitching as a guide.

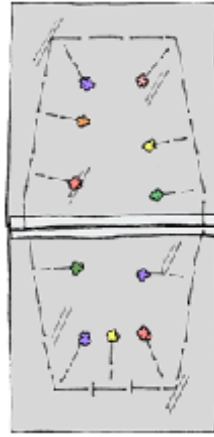
Setting the Lining

At the lower edge of each lining section, press 1/2" to wrong side.

With right sides together and handle and gussets sandwiched between, align the pressed edges of the lining with the fold line at the lower edge of the bag front. Pin the lining in place.

Claire's Hint:

Use flower head pins and set them with heads toward the center so you can stitch without



Turn handbag over so lining is on the bottom. Move needle position as needed to stitch as closely as possible to the cording. Stitch around the bag, leaving an opening at the top of the back for inserting the remaining end of the handle. Trim all seams to 1/4". Turn right side out.

Sew one large snap about 1/2" (1.2cm) below the opening. If using a colored lining, cover the snap with the lining fabric so it will be inconspicuous inside the bag.

Inserting the Cardboard

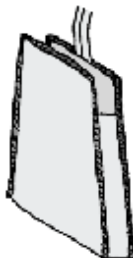
Cut the cardboard on the fold lines. Insert cardboard into the back of the bag, between the back and the back lining. Trim the edges as needed so the cardboard will fit smoothly.

Attach Patchwork Foot #37 to the sewing machine. Adjust the needle position to center. Stitch on the fold line at the lower edge of the back.

Insert the front and base cardboard pieces. Slipstitch the opening closed. Stitch on the fold line between the two cardboard pieces.

Finishing the Handle & Gussets

To finish the bottom and side of each gusset, use a hand-sewing needle and small slip stitches to sew the edges permanently to the piping.



At the upper edge of the bag, tuck remaining handle end between the bag and lining. Hand sew securely in place with backstitching.

Couching Design

Enlarge 200%

Trace onto Purse Fabric

gold metallic Ribbon Floss in center;
black/gold Radiance cord on both sides

