



Use your creativity and skills to upcycle your style by adding decorative touches to your clothes with dye, paint, beads, embroidery, and more!



Exploring Clothing Embellishment

Spark Activity: Potato Fabric Stamp

SUPPLIES:

- Large potato
- Sharp knife
- Fabric paint
- Piece of fabric (like a t-shirt, napkin, or kitchen towel)
- Paper plate
- Paper towel
- Cookie cutter in a decorative shape (optional)

DIRECTIONS:

Create a stamp from a potato and use it to stamp a design on fabric.

- Cut the potato in half lengthwise to make a long stamp, or through the middle for a smaller stamp.
- Pat the cut ends of the potato dry with a paper towel.
- Take a decorative cookie cutter and press the design into the cut end of the potato to get an outline of the cookie cutter's shape. If you don't have a cookie cutter shape you'd like to use, etch a shape outline of your choice into the cut end of the potato (such as a star, heart, or a letter of the alphabet) using a knife.
- Carefully use the knife to cut out the potato around your shape outline. Leave the area inside your shape uncut, but remove the potato (at least a 1/4 inch deep) from around the shape. You now have your stamp!
- Squeeze some fabric paint onto a paper plate and spread it around the plate so it is wide enough to be an ink pad for your potato stamp.
- Dip the stamp into the fabric paint on the plate, then press it down firmly on your piece of fabric.
- Repeat this process with the same stamp or additional stamps to create a design of your choosing.



4-H Project Levels and Goals

Beginner

- Learn about different clothing embellishment techniques
- Learn to identify clothing in your wardrobe that you want to refresh with embellishment
- Brainstorm ideas for embellishing your clothes
- Explore basic techniques like tie dye, stamping, stenciling, painting, and simple stitching

Intermediate

- Learn to apply design principles to your work
- Explore intermediate techniques like batik dyeing, machine stitching, and adding rivets, grommets, studs and eyelets

Advanced

- Learn about designers who use clothing embellishment techniques
- Explore color theory
- Explore advanced techniques like beading and sequins, fabric manipulation, and applique

Put Your Project Into Action

Show Your Skills

- Exhibit at your local 4-H Show or county fair with an embellished outfit appropriate for your experience level
- Demonstrate an embellishment technique
- Show the basics of color theory and combining colors in pleasing ways

Service and Leadership

- Embellish fabric items, like pillowcases or blankets, to donate to hospitals or nursing homes.
- Organize a community clothing drive
- Organize a community craft supply or fabric exchange
- Organize a fashion show for a local senior center
- Assist in organizing a 4-H Clothing Embellishment SPIN Club

Entrepreneurship

- Produce custom embellished clothing / items
- Teach others embellishment techniques through classes

Technology Connection

- National Institute of Fashion Technology
- LEDs or microcontrollers in clothing
- 4-H WearTec project

Connecting with a Mentor

- 4-H club leader or U of I Extension volunteers
- Local sewing group such as a chapter of the American Sewing Guild or Association of Sewing and Design Professionals
- Local college fashion departments or clubs
- Local fabric store
- High school Family & Consumer Science teachers

Events

- Exhibit at your local 4-H Show or county fair
- Technique classes at your local fabric or craft stores



Careers for People Interested in Clothing Embellishment

Apparel Designer	Fashion Stylist
Product Development Engineer	Seamstress or Tailor
	Trend Researcher

Start a Conversation

Do you have things in your wardrobe which could be altered with clothing embellishment?
What types of embellishment techniques do you see in current fashions at your local shopping center?
Why can clothing embellishment help the environment?

Want to learn more?

go.illinois.edu/4Hembellishment

Explore more at Illinois 4-H!

4-H.extension.illinois.edu



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Credits: BBC Good Food Blog: <https://www.bbcgoodfood.com/howto/guide/how-make-potato-stamps> | Authored by Amy Henschen, 4-H Senior Program Lead | 4-H Spark Sheets are a collaborative effort of 4-H staff, volunteers, alumni, and teens from across Illinois. A big thanks to the many contributors and reviewers!