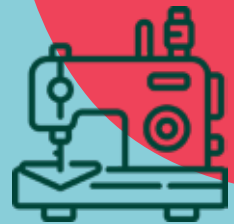


Illinois  
Extension



Illinois 4-H

CLOTHING EMBELLISHMENT PROJECT

RESOURCES





# WELCOME

Welcome to the clothing embellishment project! In this project you'll use your creativity and skills to upcycle your style by adding decorative touches to your clothes with dye, paint, beads, embroidery, and more!

Explore the resources available, from books, to videos, to websites, and choose the ones that are right for you!

We encourage you to identify an adult in your life that can help guide you in your learning. There are tools for this helper in the back of this resource guide!

You decide where you want to take your learning! At the end of your learning journey, you're invited to share something you created at your local 4-H show or fair.

We hope you enjoy this project!



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# GETTING STARTED WITH YOUR PROJECT

In this project, you'll add embellishments to your clothing with various applied and stitched techniques! The goal is for you to master different embellishment techniques like dyeing, embroidery, painting, stamping, beading, distressing, and piping, and use those techniques to take regular clothes and give them a creative upgrade!

## EMBELLISHMENT TECHNIQUES

Clothing can be embellished in a ton of different ways! Check out the list below of some of the techniques you can use.<sup>1</sup> Don't feel limited by this list! You can use just one technique or a combination of multiple techniques.

### Applied Techniques

Applied techniques are ones where the decoration is applied by painting, gluing, or fusing.

- **Dyeing** - Applying color to fabric with some type of permanence.<sup>2</sup> Dyeing techniques might include tie dye, batik, rust-dyeing, shibori, and more.
- **Grommets, Rivets & Studs** - Grommets, rivets, and studs are usually metal materials that serve as fasteners, reinforcement, or support.<sup>3</sup> They can be used to add metallic detailing to garments.
- **Jewels/Rhinestones** - Adding jewels, rhinestones, or other types of "bling" to clothing with glue or a heated tool.
- **Painting** - Using fabric paints of any type to apply designs to clothing, using brushes or other techniques (like those listed below).
- **Stamping** - Using a stamp to apply paint to fabric.
- **Stenciling** - Using a stencil to apply paint to fabric.

### Stitched Techniques

Stitched techniques are ones where the decoration is stitched by hand or machine.

- **Applique** - "A needlework technique in which one or more pieces of fabric are attached to a larger background fabric to create pictures or patterns."<sup>4</sup>
- **Beading** - Using thread to attach beads to fabric.
- **Embroidery** - "The craft of decorating fabric...using a needle to apply thread or yarn."<sup>5</sup>
- **Knitting & Crochet** - Needlework techniques that use needles or hooks to connect yarn together.





- **Smocking** - A “traditional embroidery technique that gathers fabric together into tight pleats so that it can stretch and return to its gathered shape.”<sup>6</sup>

## STARTING YOUR PROJECT

To start working on your project, you’ll decide what types of clothing embellishment techniques you want to use, and then you’ll learn and practice those techniques. Then you’ll select the piece or pieces of clothing you want to embellish with these skills and do some planning and sketching of how you’ll incorporate the embellishment. Then you put your plan into action by completing your final outfit!

Use the Illinois 4-H Clothing Embellishment Workbook to help guide you on your learning journey ([go.illinois.edu/4HEmbellishmentWorkbook](http://go.illinois.edu/4HEmbellishmentWorkbook)). Use the resources in this guide to help you learn the skills you will need to complete your outfit.

In this project, youth are encouraged to create a look that contains from 1 to 3 clothing pieces. You can also choose to embellish accessories like hats, shoes, and jewelry, but those items will not be evaluated in any project judging.

The highlighted resources are just a starting point for members. You can explore beyond these recommendations. Please be sure to have parental permission and supervision when browsing internet resources related to this topic. We encourage you to work with a parent or adult helper on your project journey!

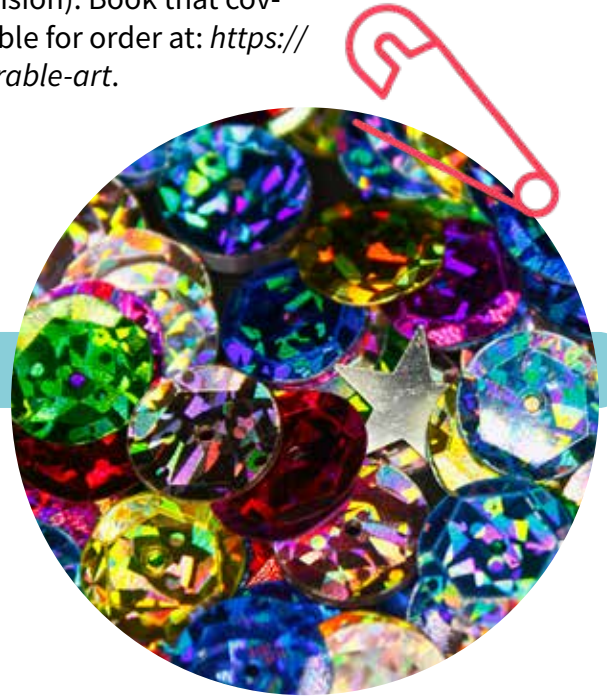


# PRINT RESOURCES

Books and other print items can be great resources to learn about clothing embellishment techniques! Explore some options below that can help teach you about how to take your ideas to reality. Some of these books may need to be purchased, but many may be available from your local library. Don't feel limited by our list of suggestions. You can find other resources from your local bookstore or library.

## GENERAL BOOKS

- **Beyond the Needle** (by Nebraska Extension): Guide that covers basics of design, as well as a variety of embellishment techniques including painting, patching, stamping, stenciling, dyeing, stitching, riveting, applique, and beading. Available for order at: <https://shop4-h.org/products/steam-clothing-curriculum-beyond-the-needle>.
- **Embellish: A 4-H Guide to Wearable Art** (by Ohio State Extension): Book that covers the process of planning for embellishing clothing. Available for order at: <https://shop4-h.org/products/copy-of-embellish-a-4-h-guide-to-wearable-art>.
- **Designed by Me** (by Ohio State Extension): Guide that covers design basics, embellishment techniques like applique, stitching, painting, dyeing, and trim work, and then talks about putting a look together. Available for order at: <https://shop4-h.org/products/created-by-me>.



## SPECIFIC TECHNIQUES

### Embroidery & Needlework

- **Embroidery: The Ideal Guide to Stitching, Whatever Your Level of Expertise** (by DK): A visual encyclopedia of stitches that will inspire and inform sewers of all levels. Includes advice on which thread, needles, or fabrics work best with different techniques.
- **Hand Embroidery Stitches at a Glance** (by Janice Vaine): A pocket-size step-by-step illustrated how-to of 30 embroidery stitches, plus tips and techniques.
- **Beginner's Guide to Crewel Embroidery** (by Jane Rainbow): A guide to using four stitch types to do crewel embroidery.
- **Encyclopedia of Needlework** (by Therese de Dillmont): Classic reference covering all aspects of needlework, including stitches and techniques.
- **The Ultimate Sashiko Sourcebook: Patterns, Projects and Inspiration** (by Susan Briscoe): Guide covering how to implement this traditional Japanese stitching technique, with patterns, step-by-step directions, and project ideas.





## Leathercrafting

- **Leathercrafting - A Step by Step, Beginners Guide to Creating Leather Armour, Costume & Accessories for Ren Events, SCA, LARP, Cosplay, Film & Theatre** (by Alex Agricola): Leathercrafting beginner's manual focusing on costumes and accessories.

## Fabric Manipulation

- **The Art of Manipulating Fabric** (by Colette Wolf): Guide on how to use three-dimensional manipulation like tucking, pleating, gathering, shirring, and quilting.
- **Fabric Manipulation: 150 Creative Sewing Techniques** (by Ruth Singer): Guide on fabric embellishment techniques like pleating, folding, gathering, smocking, and applique, with diagrams and step-by-step instructions.
- **Smocking Secrets: 20 Stitch Patterns to Create Unforgettable Texture; Cosplay, Garment, Home Dec & More** (by Maggie Hofmann): Step-by-step instructions to create 3D effects in your fabric.

## Beading

- **The Beading Bible** (by Dorothy Wood): Guide to techniques for working with beads.
- **Designer Bead Embroidery** (by Kenneth D King): Patterns and techniques for beaded borders, edgings, and motifs. Covers stitches and skills needed to add beads to fabric.

## Dyeing & Painting

- **DIY Guide to Tie Dye Style: The Basics & WAY Beyond** (by Sam Spendlove and Liz Welker): Guide explaining the different binding patterns and techniques to use in tie dye, along with various project ideas.
- **Everything You Ever Wanted to Known About Fabric Painting** (by Jill Kennedy and Jane Varrall): Illustrated book with ideas and techniques for painting and dyeing fabric.
- **Fabric Stamping: A Simple Guide to Surface Design Using Block Printing and Foam Stamps** (by Lori Wenger): Book illustrating how to create inexpensive foam stamps, as well as block print stamps to embellish fabrics. Includes material lists, pattern templates, and detailed directions.



## Applique

- **Applique: The Basics & Beyond** (by Janet Pittman): Guide to machine and hand techniques for applique projects, including step-by-step instructions, projects, layouts, and more.





## INTERNET RESOURCES

Websites and internet videos can be a great source of information and tutorials for various clothing embellishment techniques! Look for info at the websites and videos below, or explore on your own. Remember to have parental permission and supervision when looking for resources on the internet! Illinois Extension does not endorse any of the products utilized in any of these internet resources.

### WEBSITES

**Artistic Clothing Elements & Principles:** Supplement from Colorado 4-H that covers elements of art and design that can be used in putting together a clothing embellishment project. Online at: <https://co4h.colostate.edu/projects/manuals/Artistic-Clothing-Elements-Principles-Supplement.pdf>.

- **Tips & Tricks for Refashioning Your Clothing By Adding Embellishments:** Resource from Tennessee 4-H that covers some techniques for adding trims of different types, applique, buttons, and fabric embellishments. Online at <https://4h.tennessee.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/47/2020/05/Refashioning-your-clothes-embellishments.pdf>.
- **RSN Stitch Bank:** Resource from the Royal School of Needlework that digitally showcases different embroidery and embellishment stitches and offers tutorials on using them. Online at <https://rsnstitchbank.org/>.
- **Wearable Tech Tutorials:** Tutorials for incorporating LEDs and other tech into your clothing. Online at <https://www.wearabletutorials.com/how-to-use-led-lights-for-wearables-beginners-guide/>.
- **Inventive Embellishment Ideas Collection:** Collection of online tutorials from Threads magazine, ranging from knots to embroidery to fabric manipulation. Online at: <https://www.threads magazine.com/collection/19-inventive-embellishment-ideas>.



### VIDEOS

- **How to Tie-Dye at Home Like a Pro** (TulipColorCrafts): 5 techniques for tie-dyeing demoed, including spiral, heart, ice-dye crumble, reverse dye, and shibori Online at <https://youtu.be/v-BvyNgrthg?si=T3lQ8DX8xkHs2xvQ>.
- **How to Dye Fabric - No-Wax Batik Technique** (OnlineFabricStore): Tutorial on how to batik dye fabric using glue and fabric dye. Online at <https://youtu.be/C4MBRZlQxXI?si=YF3GkN2fH8S2svrZ>.
- **How to Screen Print** (Blick Art Materials): Quick tutorial on screen printing on a t-shirt using the stencil technique. Online at <https://youtu.be/9OCgFA9RJl0?si=xE0AbggjRFaJ7P5E>. Or learn based on how to





screen print using the drawing fluid technique. Online at <https://youtu.be/TVJzHzhyo-U?si=zCwkumWGNw3qe632>.

- **How to Dye** (Blick Art Materials): Quick tutorial on general dyeing techniques. Online at [https://youtu.be/UAGITIMux80?si=GhLibhZRLh00VEM\\_](https://youtu.be/UAGITIMux80?si=GhLibhZRLh00VEM_).
- **Fabric Painting Techniques** (Blick Art Materials): Various tutorials on a variety of painting techniques, including using fabric markers (<https://youtu.be/yZcFDj4uU2g?si=o1HEUjsH-8FcUaik7>), opaque fabric paints ([https://youtu.be/pPUnHD1T-GVg?si=jlVn7Z9eX1Us\\_UOZ](https://youtu.be/pPUnHD1T-GVg?si=jlVn7Z9eX1Us_UOZ)), and transparent fabric paints ([https://youtu.be/5gXzD88kSY4?si=lz3FX8yUk\\_loRnCe](https://youtu.be/5gXzD88kSY4?si=lz3FX8yUk_loRnCe)).





# COPYRIGHT GUIDELINES

These guidelines aim to help you ensure your clothing embellishment project will follow laws protecting the creations of others. It is illegal to reproduce a trademark or likeness you do not own or have not received permission to use. This is called copyright protection. It is similarly illegal for youth to use an image or brand that someone else owns as part of their 4-H project exhibit without the permission of the copyright/trademark holder

## Use of the 4-H Name and Emblem

Enrolled 4-H members are authorized to use the 4-H Name and Emblem. This includes permission for an enrolled 4-H member to use the 4-H name and emblem in exhibits you create for personal use and as part of 4-H sponsored events.

*Please note: Any use of the 4-H name and emblem on items intended as gifts or for sale require prior permission using the Application for Use of the 4-H Name and Emblem for Local Use in Illinois. Request this form from your county 4-H office. This should be signed by the Extension Director in your county. Any uses of the 4-H name and emblem for sale or promotion online, and/or in statewide events should be signed by the Illinois 4-H Director (Illinois4H@illinois.edu)*



Use of the green clover shaped image is not protected. The 4-H “emblem” is distinguished by the four H’s that signify Head, Heart, Hands and Health. No creative rendering, or change in color or shape of the official 4-H emblem is allowed. Approved 4-H emblem and details can be found at <https://go.illinois.edu/CloverResources>.

## Use of Other Copyrighted Materials

- Youth cannot feature a trademarked character, image, or logo in their art without permission from the owner. Everything that is current or popular is trademarked. Examples include:
  - No Mickey Mouse ears or popular characters painted or embroidered onto fabric
  - No painting of school logos on fabrics
  - No company logos, etc. embroidered or quilted on fabric
- Youth CAN use legally sourced branded items as part of their exhibit. Youth may NOT replicate a company’s logo, character, branding as part of their exhibit.





- They can use Disney art patch they purchased to attach to a piece of clothing; they cannot create their own
- They could use branded fabric they purchased to add fabric embellishments or applique designs to their clothing.
- They could use a purchased stencil in the shape of a copyrighted character to stamp a design on fabric.
- Even military emblems are protected by copyright. Some are allowed; others not. Learn more at <https://dod.defense.gov/Portals/1/Documents/Trademarks/DOD%20Guide%20about%20use%20of%20seals%20logos%20insignia%20medals-16%20Oct%2015F.pdf>.



Visit the Illinois 4-H State Fair website ([go.illinois.edu/StateFair4H](http://go.illinois.edu/StateFair4H)) for additional information on copyright, including frequently asked questions.





## CONNECTING TO OTHER 4-H PROJECTS

A variety of other 4-H projects may complement your learning in this project. Consider taking some of these projects to help build skills you can apply when making your costume.

### SEWING 1-3

In the sewing projects you'll learn sewing skills, like working with patterns, using different sewing machine functions, using zippers and buttons, and more. Level one starts with basic sewing skills, and as the levels advance, members build more advanced skills. In addition to learning about sewing, these projects also include lessons on color, body types, and fabrics. Learn more about this project at [go.illinois.edu/4HSewing](http://go.illinois.edu/4HSewing).

### VISUAL ARTS CHALK CARBON PIGMENT

In the visual arts chalk carbon pigment project, you can learn to use various pigments like inks, paints, and dyes on various media, including textiles, to create art. You'll experiment with different art concepts, techniques, tools and more. Learn more about this project at [go.illinois.edu/4HCCPArt](http://go.illinois.edu/4HCCPArt).

### VISUAL ARTS HERITAGE ARTS

In the visual arts heritage project you can learn techniques like crochet, weaving, and knitting that can be used for clothing embellishment. Learn more about this project at [go.illinois.edu/4HHeritageArts](http://go.illinois.edu/4HHeritageArts).

### VISUAL ARTS LEATHER

In the visual arts leather project you can learn to cut, braid, and decorate leather. This can be a great tool for doing embellishment on leather clothing and accessories. Explore stamping, carving, stitching, lacing, and other techniques in this project. Learn more about this project at [go.illinois.edu/4HLeather](http://go.illinois.edu/4HLeather).





## SHOWING YOUR LEARNING

4-Hers are encouraged to demonstrate their learning in this project by showing off their embellished clothing and accompanying Illinois 4-H Clothing Embellishment Workbook in their local 4-H fair or show. View your county fair or show book for specific details on exhibit requirements for this project.

4-H club members can embellish clothing for themselves or another person. Only one complete embellished outfit may be entered each year, though you are free to create more. You must bring your completed Illinois 4-H Clothing Embellishment Workbook to judging, along with your outfit (1 to 3 embellished pieces that complement each other). Workbooks may be supplemented with additional information and pages, but all sections should be complete. As part of the workbook, you'll be asked to provide one or more photos of the completed outfit on whoever it was created for (complete with all accessories and styling). For judging you'll bring the outfit on hangers for the judge to examine, and then be asked to try the outfit on (if it was made for yourself) so they can observe the fit and motion.

Projects will be judged on a variety of factors, including creativity, quality of embellishment, and the overall design and material choices. See the scoresheet for more information. Scoresheets are available on the Illinois State 4-H Show website at <https://4h.extension.illinois.edu/events/state-events/illinois-state-fair>.





## LEADER OR PROJECT HELPER RESOURCES

Having a trusted adult to guide learning can help youth take their projects to the next level. Thanks for being that helper! The resources below can be used by volunteers to teach clothing embellishment lessons with groups of youth, or can be used as guides to help supplement learning by a single member.

### WEAR TEC BOOK 2: SEWING LEADERS GUIDE

Curriculum to help adults guide youth in creating clothing that incorporates technology like lights. Available for purchase on Shop 4-H at <https://shop4-h.org/products/weartec-2-sewing-microcontrollers-leaders-guide?variant=12494966947942>.

### DICK BLICK LESSON PLANS

Searchable free lesson plans from art supply store Dick Blick. Lessons related to clothing embellishment include fabric printing with relief blocks, artfully altered fabric design, batik t-shirts, drawing with thread, glue batik, felt molas, and more. Online at <https://www.dickblick.com/lesson-plans/>.



### PBS TEXTILE ART RESOURCES

Lesson plans on textile arts from PBS, including projects, along with interviews with artists, and examples of fabric art techniques throughout history. Online at [https://illinois.pbslearningmedia.org/subjects/the-arts/visual-art/visual-art-media/textile-art/?rank\\_by=recent](https://illinois.pbslearningmedia.org/subjects/the-arts/visual-art/visual-art-media/textile-art/?rank_by=recent).

### FAVORITE FIBER ARTS LESSONS

Teacher Cassie Stephens offers good tips, especially tailored for elementary age youth, on teaching fiber arts to youth. Online at <https://cassiestephens.blogspot.com/2019/03/in-art-room-my-favorite-fiber-arts.html-teaching-and-learning-resources>.

### CULTURAL APPRECIATION VERSUS APPROPRIATION

Resource from University of Idaho 4-H that helps provide context on cultural appreciation versus appropriation in the visual arts. Big ideas and resources shared in this document can help adult helpers guide youth who include cultural influences in their project work. Online at <https://go.illinois.edu/CulturalAppreciation>.





# CREDITS

This resource was compiled by Amy Henschen, with content contributions by Amy Zepp, Barbara Dubravec, Elaine Kaple, and Kristi Smith. It was originally published in June 2024. Please note that while all links were working at time of publication, links may become inactive or move over time. If you encounter a broken link, try searching for the name of the resource, and report the broken link to your local 4-H staff.

## SOURCES

- 1 Bryant Roediger, M. (2012). *Embellish: A 4-H Guide to Wearable Art*. Ohio State University.
- 2 Cotton Works. (n.d.). *Textile dyeing*. Cotton Works. [https://www.cottonworks.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/Dyeing\\_Booklet.pdf](https://www.cottonworks.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/Dyeing_Booklet.pdf)
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- 6 Singer, R. (2023, October 16). *What is smocking: Textile art*. Mr X Stitch. <https://www.mrxstitch.com/smocking>

## PHOTOS & IMAGES

- *All icons throughout from Flaticon.com:* scissors by PIXARTIST; sketch, sewing machine, zipper & Celtic knot by Freepik; needle & thread by Good Ware; fabric roll and stencil by Smashicons; button by Daniel ceha; safety pin by afif fudin; dress form by iconixar; leather tools by Eucalyp; workbook by Vector Squad.
- *Cover:* green embroidered shirt, photo by Toa Heftiba on Unsplash; smiling girl in tie dye shirt, photo by Benigno Hoyuela on Unsplash; buttons and sewing notions, photo by Merve Sehirlir on Unsplash
- *Page 2:* embroidered flowers, photo by Barbara Krysztofiak on Unsplash
- *Page 3:* paint brushes, photo by Rhondak Native Florida Folk Artist on Unsplash
- *Page 4:* shirt with embroidered sleeves, photo by Valerie Elash on Unsplash
- *Page 5:* sequins, photo by Cee Ayes on Unsplash
- *Page 6:* tie dye fabric, photo by Alexander Grey on Unsplash
- *Page 7:* dog fabric painting, photo by Elena Mozhvilo on Unsplash
- *Page 8:* embroidery floss, photo by Mel Poole on Unsplash
- *Page 9:* embellished jacket, photo by Bri Tucker on Unsplash
- *Page 10:* tie dye shirt, photo by Joshua Stitt on Unsplash
- *Page 11:* fabric stamping, photo by Agto Nugroho on Unsplash
- *Page 12:* leather working, photo by Angelina Litvin on Unsplash
- *Page 13:* embroidered collar, photo by Arwa Musallam on Unsplash
- *Page 14:* bling jacket, photo by Lexscope on Unsplash
- *Back Cover:* applique of birds, photo by Thales Botelho on Unsplash





# NOTES





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