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## **Make an Embroidered Floral Patch** with Lauren from Lark Rising Embroidery

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### **Chapter 1 - Make an Embroidered Patch**

#### Overview

(bright music) - Most of the embroidered patches you see in stores and for purchase elsewhere are embroidered on a machine, but this is a skill you can actually do yourself. My name is Lauren and I'm an embroidery artist in Seattle, Washington. This class features a floral design that's very whimsical and customizable and I'll be using it to teach you the skills needed to create an embroidered patch of your very own. I'll be teaching you a couple of different stitches including the basics of thread painting, which is a technique you can use to blend your colors together as you stitch and create flowers that look really realistic and nature inspired. Embroidery is a slow and meditative process and this isn't a project that you'll finish overnight. Lean into the joy of making your own piece of wearable art. (bright music)

#### Materials

- Let's go over the materials we'll need for this class. The first thing to think about when collecting your supplies is what you want to attach your patch onto. I've chosen this denim shirt. You'll need a piece of fabric that's about nine inches square. I've chosen a white piece of fabric to stitch my patch onto just so you could see what I'm doing more easily. If you like, it's often nice to choose a piece of fabric that matches the color of whatever you will be attaching the patch to. I'll be demonstrating this class with a color palette of these nine colors. You can choose your own colors or follow along with me, but you'll also want to include a skin of thread that matches the item you plan to attach the patch to. Additionally, you should have a piece of felt that matches the color of the fabric you stitch your patch onto. This doesn't need to be an exact match, but if you're using a light fabric, you'll want a light piece of felt. And if you're using a darker fabric, you'll want a dark piece of felt. Collect one size five embroidery needle, a pair of small sharp scissors, something to trace the design onto your fabric with. I prefer this pilot friction erasable pen, a five-inch embroidery hoop, some large fabric sheers and the traceable floral template included in this classes PDF. Part of the process of this class will be attaching the patch to your garment or bag. I'm using this craft bond fabric and paper glue by Elmer's as part of that process. You can choose any clear washable glue as part of this step. As you trace the design template onto your fabric, it's helpful to have a light source underneath. I'll be using a light table to trace my design. But if you don't have one, you can also tape both the template and the fabric to a window and trace using natural light. Pilot friction pens can be erased with heat. I'll be using a heat gun to erase the ink at the end of the project, but you can also use an at-home blow-dryer for this step. There are a couple of extra things to consider when choosing your fabric for this project. Choose a stable fabric, like a linen, cotton, or linen-cotton blend, as opposed to something stretchy like a Jersey knit. As you choose your color of fabric, you'll want to consider both the item you'll be stitching on and whether or not you want to see visible fabric around the edges of your embroidery. You can intentionally choose a fabric color that you want to see around the edges of your floral patch. This can be something that you feel compliments, the colors of thread you've chosen and/or the color of the garment you're a fixing the patch to. Alternately, you could choose a color of fabric that matches your garment or bag. If you choose to work on a dark fabric, like navy, or black you'll need to select a marking tool to trace your design that shows up as white or something that you can easily see, while you use stitch. Depending

on whether or not you want to see visible fabric on your patch, there are a couple of different ways that you can choose to affix the patch to your garment. If you leave a little bit more room around the edge of the design, as you cut it out, you'll be able to stitch around the edge and leave a band of fabric that you can see around the edges of all of the leaves and flowers. If you don't wanna see any of the visible fabric between your garment and the floral design, I'll be demonstrating a way to affix your patch to a garment, while covering up any visible fabric around the floral design. You'll find the list of all of these materials, as well as the specific thread colors I've used in the class PDF.

#### Transfer the design

- Before stitching, transfer the design onto your fabric by tracing. Place your design template on the light source and then the fabric overtop. When you're satisfied with where the design is placed, you can begin to trace. Use your non-tracing hand to stabilize both the paper and fabric as you trace. Before moving the fabric and paper off of your light source, turn the light source off, if you can, and make sure that you didn't miss tracing over any parts. I can see here that I forgot to trace the center of this flower, so I'll turn the light source back on and make sure I do that now. After you've transferred the design, place the fabric in your hoop. Begin by unscrewing the tightening mechanism at the top of your hoop and separating the two pieces. Place the inner circle underneath your fabric, centering the design. Grab that top hoop, and place it gently over the inner ring, making sure not to warp your fabric too dramatically. If you're satisfied with how the design looks in the fabric, tighten the hoop. Begin tightening, and only tighten it about halfway at first. And then gently tug the fabric so that it's more tightly sitting in the hoop. Do this all the way around the edge of the hoop. Once that's in there more snugly, tighten the screw at the top of your hoop all the way until you can't tighten it anymore. Do one more tug all the way around the edge to make sure your fabric is drum-tight in the hoop. (finger thumps) And then you're ready to stitch.

#### Embroider flower centers

- We'll begin stitching by filling the flower centers with French knots. We'll use two strands of black thread to do this. I'll be using DMC brand thread throughout this project. And for this type of thread, make sure to pull the thread out from the end that has this longer plastic bit and says the thread color number on it. Pulling from this end will help prevent getting tangles. Pull out a length of thread that's about 12 to 18 inches long and trim it. Since we're using two strands of thread for our French knots, you'll need to go to one end and separate out two strands gently pulling the two groups of thread apart. Once you have your two strands separated, you can thread them onto your needle. Place the needle about 2/3 into your length of thread on one side with 1/3 of the length of thread remaining on the opposite end. As you work, you'll work from this longer length of thread so you'll tie a knot at the long end and as you stitch, this part of the thread will be used up. As you use up this part of thread, be sure to pull your needle out as you go. Trim the little tail next to your knot so that it's nice and short. And now you'll be ready to stitch. If you're a beginning stitcher, French knots can be a little bit intimidating. Feel free to practice on a separate piece of fabric until you get the hang of it, or if you'd like to skip French knots all together, you can fill the center ring of each flower with a bunch of tiny straight stitches all layered together. To stitch a French knot, bring your needle up through the fabric from the backside. Pull the thread through until you feel that knot bump against the backside of the fabric. And with your opposite hand, from the one that's holding your needle, grab the thread and wrap it twice around the needle. While maintaining tension in the thread by holding it, gently place your needle back into the fabric right next to where the thread is

already coming out. Push the needle back through and grab it from the other side, maintaining tension in the thread the whole time. That's your first French knot. You'll continue placing French knots right next to one another until this whole center ring is filled. Sometimes as you pull your knot down flush against the top of the fabric, your knot will actually pull through to the other side. This is happening because we're using such a small amount of thread. If that happens, it's really okay, it happens to me regularly, you can just place another new knot right on top of where the old one pulled through. When you finished stitching a section, or if you come close to running out of thread, you'll need to tie a knot and get a new piece. I like to tie a knot by tucking my needle under one of the previous stitches that I've made, creating this loop and then sticking my needle back through the loop and pulling it. Do this two times in the same spot for a secure knot. For the remainder of this project, we'll be using a single strand of thread to stitch. There are a couple of reasons why I've done this. First, it's because we want our stitches to be very smooth and flat to the surface of the fabric so that as you wear a patch on your clothing or on your bag, nothing can get snagged on your keys or your cat or whatever else you have. The second reason is because we'll be using a technique called thread painting. Thread painting is a technique used by embroidery artists that allows you to blend seamlessly from one color of thread to another by using a series of long and short stitches. Instead of using thread painting techniques to transition through a lot of different colors, I've paired our color palette down to be more of a color blocked design. That means black centers, a ring of a lighter color around the outside of the center, and then solid colored petals. As we go, I'll explain how you could transition between more colors if you wish or continue with the color block design as I have. The next step is to create a ring with black stitches around our French knot centers. This will be a series of long and short stitches that radiate out from the center. Since our area around the outside of the flower is longer than the area around the center, our stitches will need to fan out slightly and be placed closer together at the center of the flower. You can begin anywhere you want around this center ring. As you place your stitches, think about placing one longer stitch, one shorter stitch, and then a longer stitch again, alternating back and forth as you go around. That being said, all of your stitches should be quite small. None of them should be longer than 1/16 of an inch. Since the French knot centers have stitches that are a little bit raised, be sure to tuck your needle slightly under the French knots to make sure you don't leave any fabric exposed. As you can see here, there's a little bit of fabric showing so I'm going to add another stitch into that area. If you already have some embroidery experience, you may have seen techniques similar to this before and have heard them described as long and short stitch or brick stitch. These techniques are all very similar and if you've done them, they'll help you on your way. Here I finished filling all of the flower centers with French knots and outlining them in the ring of black stitches. For this lower and upper flower, that ring of black stitches doesn't go quite all the way around because these petals here and here are blocking what would be the other side of the flower center.

### Embroider the petals

- The next step is to add in color. As I said before, I'll be adding a ring of a lighter color around each flower center and then filling the remainder of the petals with one color for each flower. You could do this in several different ways. You could do each flower in its own color. Like I've done. You could do all three flowers in one color so that their group of matching flowers or you could add in even more colors if you wish. The technique of these long and short stitches that blend into one another is really great for adding more depth with color. If you are using pinks, for example you could use three to four shades of pink and blend from light at the center, all the way out to darker at

the edges of the petal or vice versa. I'll be demonstrating the next steps of this project on the center flower here. I'll use this salmon colored thread for the ring around the black centers and this orangy red for the main petals. This light light pink will be used for the rings around the flower center here and here. As you stitch this next section, look back at the stitches you've already done in the black ring, where you've stitched a long stitch place a shorter stitch in the new color on top of it. And where you've placed a short stitch place a longer stitch in the new color on top of it. And again, since these petals fan out and get wider as they go, we'll need more stitches to fill in the area across. I'll show you how to sneak in extra stitches as we move along. As you add the new layer of stitches make sure that you always start on the unstitched side. So the side closest to the outside edge of the petals and bring your needle back down through the same hole in the fabric as the existing stitches. That way you are reinforcing the direction that your stitches are going, instead of pulling them up by pulling the needle and new stitch through. All of your stitches will not be the same length you'll have longer and shorter stitches. And the main thing to remember is that you want the line that you're creating at the top here to be uneven. None of your stitches that are right next to each other should be the same length. Color blocking by using two colors in well-defined areas for each flower gives these a more whimsical effect. If you want your flowers to look more natural you can add partial second rows or even third rows of these lighter colors and blend into a slightly darker color in just some areas as you move up the petal. I'm gonna switch now to this bright reddish orange color and fill in the remainder of my petals with just this shade. Continue to bring your needle up through the outside edge of your stitch and bring it back down toward the center of the flower, rotate your stitches from an angle like this one around to an angle more like this throughout this petal. You can rotate the angle of your stitches by bringing the top part of your stitch slightly out and then bringing the bottom part of your stitches closer together. You can also add in extra stitches as you reach the wider part of the petal. As you can see here, as I rotated the angle of this stitch to match the center line of the petal there's a little bit of a gap. So I'll add in another stitch here. Another technique you can use to help make sure that your stitches are staying true to the shape of the petal is to section the petal off as you go. By stitching a row of back stitch all the way up one part of the petal, like this. Back stitches are bringing your needle up through the fabric and replacing it back down in the end of the previous stitch. Once you create this line, you have a long section here that you can fill before moving on to the rest of the petal. It's easier to manage the angle of your stitches in a small section like this as opposed to monitoring it through a full petal at once. Additionally, you can stitch a row of back stitch along the edge of the petal, to help make sure that that makes a clean line. Whether you choose to add your stitches working in rows from the center of the flower out toward the petals edges, or by sectioning off areas of the petal and working all the way to the top. Just make sure that stitches adjacent to one another have different lengths of where they start and stop and that you try as much as possible to echo the shape of each petal with your stitches. When you get to this flower and this one, remember that these petals that you see here are actually the outside edges of the petals and are turned upward. Your stitches should have an angle like this. It's best to work from the bottom of these petals toward this center area, instead of from the center down. Here's what it looks like to stitch these turned up petals.

### Embroider leaves

- After stitching all of your flower petals, you'll be ready to move on to stitching the leaves. We'll use a very similar stitching technique, except for this time we'll begin at the center vein of each leaf

and stitch out toward the edge. As you work, it's a great idea to have your color guide handy. I've used four different shades of green to stitch my leaves. You can do them all in one color, in two colors, or any other combination of green you like. As you refer to your color guide, make sure to look at both pages, both the color guide that has the color names listed, as well as the color placement guide. I've used two shades of green for each leaf, and the color placement guide will help you know which color of green goes where. To add more visual interest to these leaves, I've stitched each one with an inside layer of stitches in one color and an outside layer toward the edges in a second color. For each leaf, you'll start adding stitches in the direction that you would imagine the leaf growing from the center outward. Stitches should look something like this as they move toward the point and outer edge. For this one, since this leaf is more curved, your stitches will look a little bit different but follow the same general idea. Place your first stitches of each leaf right along that center line. Remember to keep your stitches small, with each new stitch ending at a different point than the one next to it. As you stitch, make sure that all of these initial stitches touch the line that reaches up the center of the leaf. As you reach the bottom of this first leaf, the space between the center line and the outer edge of the leaf will narrow. And it's okay to fill in this whole area with your first row of stitches. Once you stitch all the way from the top to the bottom of the leaf on the first side, return to the top and stitch down the other side of the leaf. As you go, your stitches between this new side and the original side should make a V shape. After completing these first two rows of stitches on the leaf, you should have the entire center of the leaf filled with your first color, creating a V shape along the line of the vein. Before moving on to the second color for the outer edge of the leaf, add in a few more stitches here at the center of the leaf where it gets wider. If you're following what I'm doing and using two colors of green for each leaf, you'll need to use your own judgment to decide how much you want to do with the center color and how much room to leave on the outer edge for that second color of green. Play around with different techniques for doing this, and maybe do some leaves with a thinner amount of the inside color and a wider outside color or vice versa. It can be a really nice effect to have a variety of ways that you do this throughout the design. When you're ready to switch to the second color on each leaf, pick up just where you left off by continuing to add stitches just around the outside of what you did with the first color, and work your way toward the outer edge of the leaf, adding as many rows in each area as necessary. Continue to use alternating stitch lengths to make sure that the outside edge of the row you're working on is jagged. Continue filling in each leaf using these same techniques. Embroidery is a really forgiving craft. If you leave a gap or a space in your stitching, it's very easy to go back and add in a stitch later. Even if you finish up your whole design and you see a gap in a flower or leaf, you can go back any time and fill those in with another stitch. This project is especially forgiving since we're working with mostly just one strand of thread. If you put in a stitch somewhere that you don't like, maybe it's too long or going in the wrong direction, you can easily take it out by pulling the needle off of your thread. Hook it under the stitch you just made, and pull it out from the front, and then flip the piece over and pull it out from the back. At this point, you can rethread your needle and continue stitching. When you finish up stitching all of your leaves, they should look something like this. This concludes the embroidery portion of your project. Before moving on to cutting out your patch, erase any leftover lines left by your FriXion pen with a heat gun or blow dryer. Now that your embroidery is complete, it's time to turn it into a patch.

#### Construct and attach patch

- Turning your finished embroidery into a patch is much quicker than doing the embroidery itself.

But make sure you take this process really slowly. You wouldn't want to do anything to endanger all the work you've just finished. Remove your embroidery from the hoop. You'll be trimming away the excess fabric. So don't worry about the crease made by the hoop. You should have the piece of felt that you're going to use to back the patch handy at this point. Make sure that the felt is trimmed so that it completely covers your embroidery. This will actually go on the backside of the embroidered patch, but it helps to make sure you have the right size before continuing on. The next step is to cut out your embroidered patch. We'll be cutting by leaving a little bit of an edge around every part of the embroidery. To start off with, leave a quarter to half an inch. If you find it helpful, you can use your friction pen to draw an outline around the patch before cutting. Use your fabric sheers to slowly and carefully cut around the patch. Once you've cut the patch out from your fabric, you'll attach it to your piece of felt. This can be done in a couple of different ways. You can choose to use a few straight pins and attach it to the felt, but I feel more secure using some fabric safe, washable glue. Gently dab the glue onto the back of your embroidery, only putting glue where the embroidered areas are. And then use either your finger, a Q-tip, or a paintbrush to gently spread the glue around. Gently press your patch into the piece of felt. After your initial placement of the patch onto the felt, give the glue moment to dry and then check to see whether you need to add any more on some of the outer edges. Remember to go slowly, you can always add more glue as you need it. Give the glue a few more minutes to dry before doing anything else. Once your glue is dry, cut out the felt to match the top fabric. If you feel comfortable, you can trim away a little bit more of the fabric on your patch. Grab your shirt or whatever it is you'll be attaching the patch to. Decide where you want to place your patch, and grab your glue. Just as you did before, add a few dabs of glue to the back of the patch. Carefully place the patch where you want it to go, and press down until the glue dries. We'll be using thread to affix the patch permanently, so this glue is just for a temporary hold while you work. Grab the color of thread you'll be using to affix the patch to your shirt, and thread two strands of that thread onto your needle. I'll be using a whip stitch to wrap the entire edge of the patch with thread and affix it to the shirt. But before doing that, I'll place a few stitches around the edge of the patch just to secure it further to the shirt. Continue adding these small stitches around the entire patch until the whole thing is tacked down securely. To do an embroidered whip stitch, bring your needle up through the fabric of the shirt, the felt, and the patch. And replace the needle back down just through the shirt. Bring your needle back up through all three layers right next to where you placed that first stitch. Replacing the needle back down through just the shirt again, next to where you finished the first stitch. This essentially wraps the felt and the fabric in thread, securing the edge so it doesn't fray. Continue adding these stitches all the way around the edge of the patch. Stitches should be very close together without leaving visible fabric in between. Affixing your patch securely will take awhile. Put on a good podcast or Netflix show while you work. As you can see here, I finished my whip stitch all the way around the edge of the patch. Wherever possible, I stitched all the way up to the edge of my floral embroidery and leaves. Since I had some leftover gaps of white fabric still visible, I wanted to fill those in. I used the same color of thread that I used to whip stitch the edge, and used a single strand to fill in those gaps, using the same long and short stitch thread painting technique that we used on the rest of the patch. I added those extra stitches in several places at the corners of where the flowers and leaves met, and in-between leaves where I didn't want to cut my patch out too closely. Thank you for joining me on this embroidered patch journey. To continue the fun, you can create more floral patches in any color of your choosing or add a second patch to the same garment in a mirrored image. You can take these skills with you and create any patch you can dream of. Just remember to

keep your stitches small and enjoy the process.