

Tips for Dazzling Denim

Workshop, April 12, 2025



Applique:

- Needle turned or raw edge
- Easier to use fabric with body
- Can add body using iron-on interfacing
- Use fusible products like Steam-A-Seam or Heat and Bond

Jewel application:

- Use permanent gem glue like Fabrifuse, Gem Tac, B-7000
- More affordable/selection purchased online
- Use old jewelry if holes are big enough
- Big or round jewels may have to be sewn on or prong set

Trim application:

- Work in odd numbers for better design balance
- Melt ends of ribbon or lace if synthetic to stop fraying

Embroidery/topstitching:

- When topstitching, use regular thread in the bobbin and embroidery thread on top
- For machine embroidery, tear away stabilizer is recommended
- Use embroidery floss and needles

Sashiko:

- Use a fine marker to mark out stitching pattern
- Vary the stitch patterns and thread colours
- A silicone fingertip/thimble helps with thick areas
- Use an embroidery needle and floss

Fabric addition:

- Plan how you are going to integrate fabric.
- Make pattern pieces from tissue to ensure you have enough fabric and to make best use of designs
- Be sure to balance use of fabric on both front and back of garment

Bleached designs:

- Look at fabric content and try to get as close to fully cotton as possible
- Find spray bottle with a fine mist
- Best to do it outdoors on a warm, calm and sunny day
- Build overspray protection using cardboard and tape

Painting/stenciling:

- Acrylic paints okay but mix with fabric medium so it adheres well and is not stiff
- Liquidex is available at Michael's craft store in painting isle
- Prewash garment or fabric to remove sizing
- Heat set the paint by ironing from the back or wrong side

Fraying/fabric manipulation:

- Cut fringes as straight as possible and remove threads to create fray with a fork, by rubbing
- Prevent further fraying by sewing on top of fringe or by using fabric glue
- Tucks, Shirring or ruffles are best created with thinner denim

General suggestions for Denim:

- Use a jean needle in your sewing machine.
- Consider the fabric content of your denim as it often contains varying amounts of synthetic and stretch fibres which can impact ease of sewing.
- Use a rotary cutter to maintain the grain when cutting long strips of fabric.
- Consider the strength of your thread. You may need to move up to a 30-weight thread for heavier denim.
- Slow down the machine speed to go over thicker seams.