

Saturday Sampler Urban Owls

Center Block



Welcome to Urban Owls! We are starting with the Center Block. I know its an intimidating place to start but it's the best way to create the vibe for your quilt. I am showing you how I made my block and adding some alternate ways to applique as we go. For the most part I machine appliqued my pieces on using a combination of freezer paper, steam a seam 2 lite and wonder tape. All of my edges except for my stems are raw edge. Please use whatever method of applique you want. Your fabric choices might dictate what applique method is best.

Think about the color palette that you want for your quilt. One of my hesitations when deciding on this quilt was the busyness and it I thought was really dark. I changed my background behind the owls and it brightened up the center immensely. Think about what kind of fabrics you want to use for your applique. You can use all cotton, wool, wool felt, any textured fabrics would be great. You can get a great variety of color and texture if you add wool or wool felt to your project.

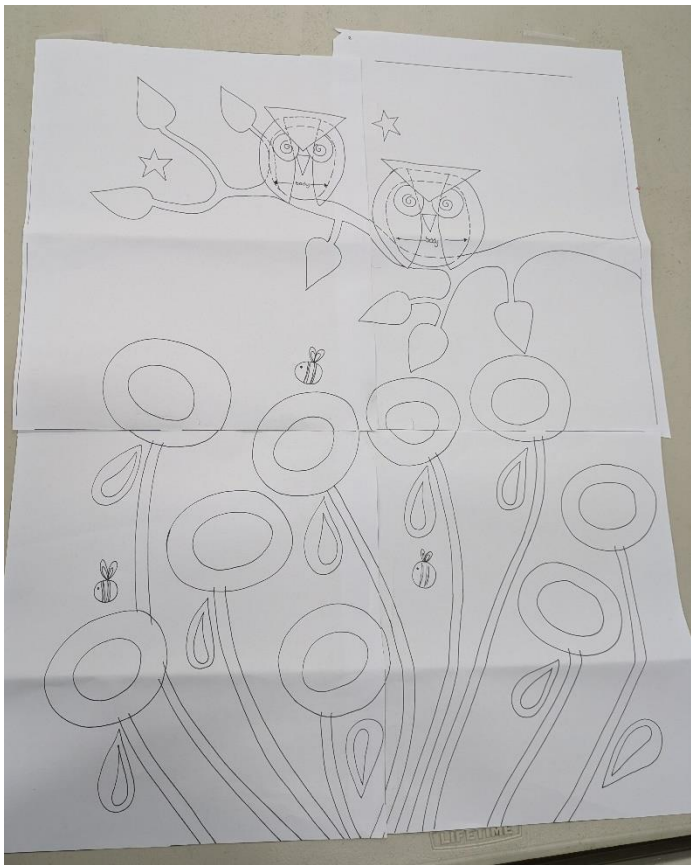
What kind of applique is best for you? Do you want finished edges? Do you want to hand sew or machine?

Raw edge fusible applique is fast and easy. It is tracing, cutting, pressing and machine sewing. You can use the decorative stitches on your machine, straight stitch, zig zag or blanket stitch. It all depends on what you want to see.

Needle turn applique is probably the most time consuming. It is a method of hand applique where you are folding the seam allowance and stitching the shape to the background at the same time. It takes a bit of practice to get your shapes smooth.

Wool applique is fun and you can add a ton of embellishment with different stitches and thread. You will use freezer paper to trace and cut your shapes.

Take the time to think about it and plan your quilt. You can always change mid-way (I did) but it is nice to have an idea going in to a project like this.



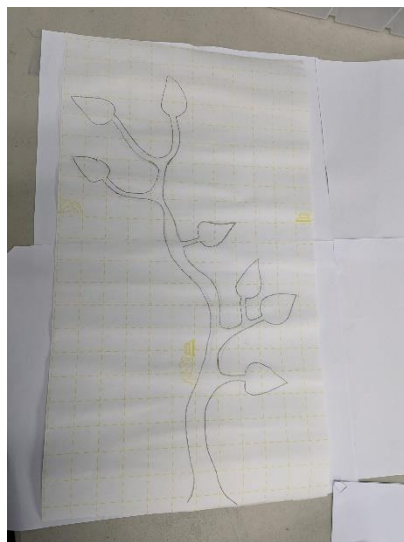
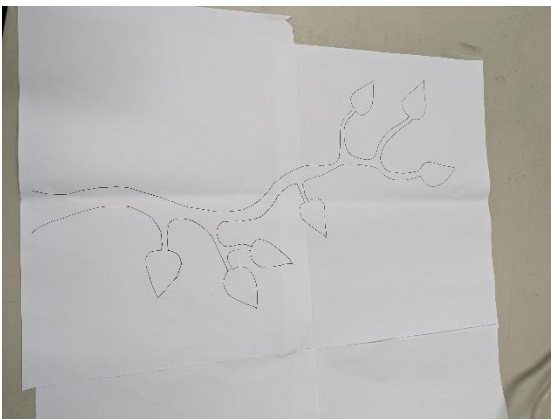
Your pattern comes with paper template inserts. Find the center block papers, trim the edges to the marked lines and tape them together so you have a life size sheet. The images are not reversed. If you are using fusible to applique you will have to reverse the images. The easiest way to do that is tape the template to a window with the design facing out. Using a fine tip sharpie or Micron Pen trace the design onto the back of the paper. Now your design is reversed!

There is my template taped together and ready to go.

Read your pattern. Wendy has a ton of instruction and great tips in the pattern for applique.

This quilt is very free-form. If you want more in depth instruction consider coming to our open sew days- Tuesday Sew, Late Night Sew or Finish It Classes. We can really strategize there.

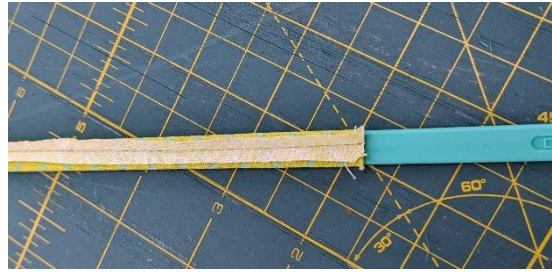
OK, I started with my tree. I reversed the image of the branch onto the back of my template sheet. I then traced that onto my steam a seam 2 lite.



Once that was traced I followed the steam a seam directions and ironed it to the back of my branch fabric.

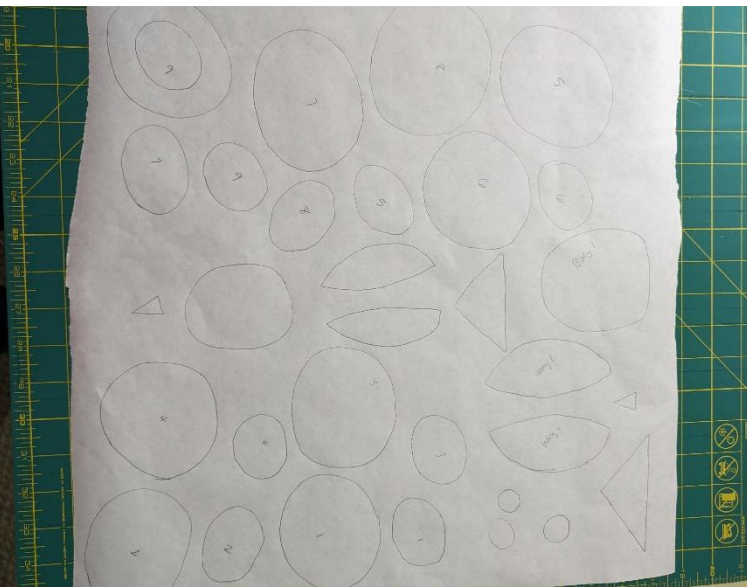
Now the branch can be cut with a sharp scissor. I cut mine and set it aside until I was ready to assemble.

From there I moved on to the flowers.



I cut my stem fabric on the bias and made 1.25" strips. (She suggested using $\frac{3}{4}$ " and a $\frac{3}{8}$ " bias maker) I had the bias bars from last year's Saturday Sampler so that is what I used.) I sewed my strip right side together and trimmed my seam. Now the bias bar goes in the tube and you can press your seam open and it is ready to cut to size.

Now it was time to decide what to make my flowers out of. I used a combination of wool and wool felt. Wendy used a cotton fabric also in hers. Make them with as many layers and textures as you want.



I used freezer paper to get my flower shapes. Trace your shape onto the matte side of the freezer paper.

I numbered the flowers on my main template and then numbered the traced pattern with the corresponding number.

Rough cut your shapes out of the freezer paper and decide what fabric they are going to be cut out of.

Iron them (iron on the matte side) to the back of your fabric. If you are raw edge sewing you can cut these shapes out now.

If you want to turn your edges cut your shapes at least $\frac{1}{4}$ " bigger all the way around your drawn edge. This will be your seam allowance.



I kept my template sheet near me so I could place the cut pieces on the design as I went. It made it easy to see my color placement and kept my pieces in order.

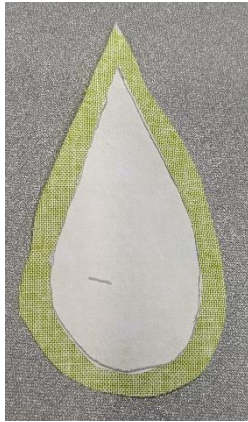


I followed that same process for the other pieces.



Lets talk about your leaves. I used cotton for my leaves and wool for the inside piece of the leaf. I traced both pieces with freezer paper and in hindsight should have just used fusible. My wool inside piece was small and the wool is a relatively loose weave, the fusible would have held it together better for stitching and would have made a cleaner look. I tried a couple of ways of applique on the leaves.

here are a couple of leaves traced with freezer paper.



I left enough to create a seam allowance and using my iron pressed the seam around the freezer paper

I didn't love this method and thought the edges weren't as smooth as I wanted them. If I was hand stitching my pieces on this would be the method I would use though. It helps to use some best press on these edges to keep them tucked in.

Next I traced another leaf onto the back of my fabric. I paired this with another piece of the same fabric right sides together and sewed them on the drawn line. I then made a slice in the back extra backing piece. Now I can turn this inside out and

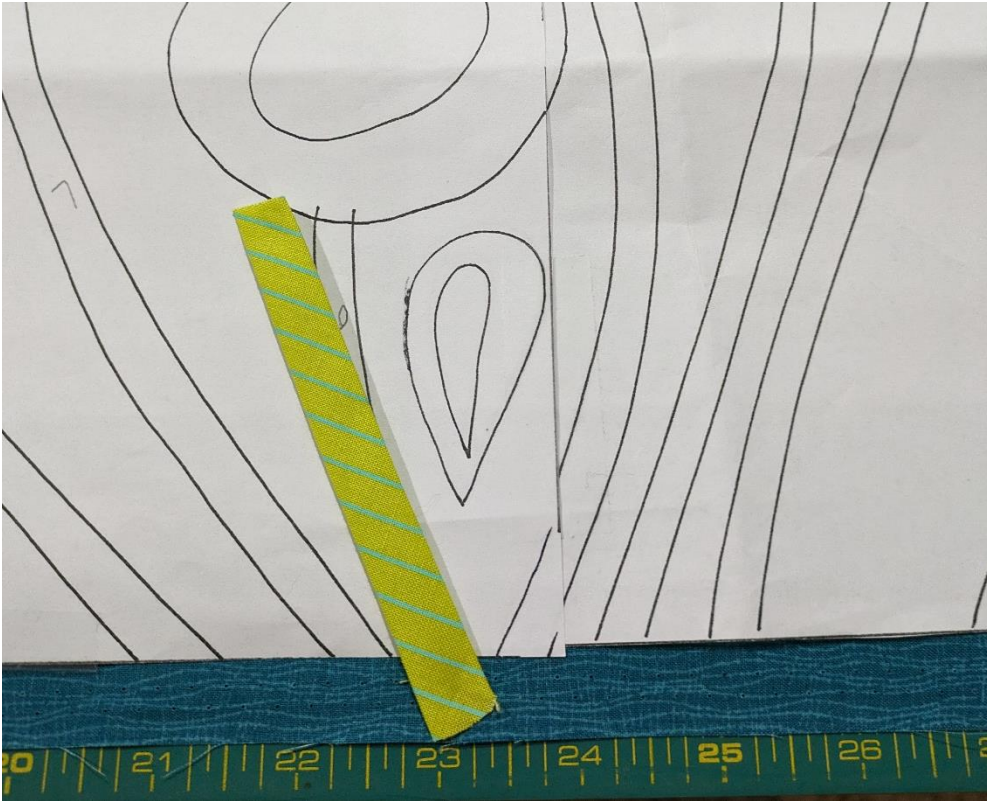


it should give me the shape I want with turned edges.



Nope!

Once all of your pieces are traced and cut you can start to assemble. I used wonder tape (double stick that washes away) and lined the back of my stems so they would stay in place until I stitched them.



I laid my background out and placed the template over the top so I could get the bottom placement of the stems. I then moved my template and eyeballed the placement of the rest of the stem.



Once the stems were in place I machine topstitched them in place with a coordinating thread on each edge.

Next I planned the layers of my flowers together. It helped to see them in place so I could plan the colors better.



Once these were decided I stitched my layers of flowers together and added them to the stems.

I worked on the owls next and planned their fabric, cut and stitched. I used a cotton fabric for my owl eyes and wool/wool felt for the rest. I will go back and add some hand stitching embellishments throughout the year 😊



Stitch down all of your pieces either by hand or machine and you are done!



Ben Franklin® Crafts & Frame Shop

MONROE LOCATION:
19505 Hwy 2, Monroe, WA, 98272
360-794-6745 | www.bfranklincrafts.com

