



TUTORIAL – CREATING BACKGROUNDS I

Sometimes we want something more exciting than just a piece of fabric to use when stitching our designs. This document shows you an easy way to create exciting backgrounds! You can use this method for pictures, wall hangings, even quilts. This is the method I have been using in the 12 Days of Christmas designs. You can apply this method to many different materials – only your stash and your imagination are your limitations. I am now gathering materials to use for a *Halloween* Background and will do another Tutorial for that,

You can use any fabric of course, but if you want to create a unique background that sparkles and shimmers it is very easy!!! I used fabric, netting, organza, metallic mesh and Angelina fibers for this background.

1. Cut a piece of background fabric at least 2 inches bigger than your finished project all around.
2. Prepare Angelina Fibers
 - a. You need to prepare several *pieces* of Angelina fibers. These will be very thin. I used Silver Iris, Gold Iris and Rusty Nail. You can use the crimped fibers or the straight ones.
 - b. Place *wisps* of fibers onto your Teflon pressing sheet or parchment paper. You don't need much at all because you will want the fabric to show through.



- c. Press. When you lift the top sheet you will see it has probably stuck to the top sheet. Just peel it off. If it doesn't seem to have bonded, press another second or two – it doesn't take much!



- d. You can see how thin they are below. Make several more pieces of fibers as desired. I made some of Silver Iris and Rusty Nail.



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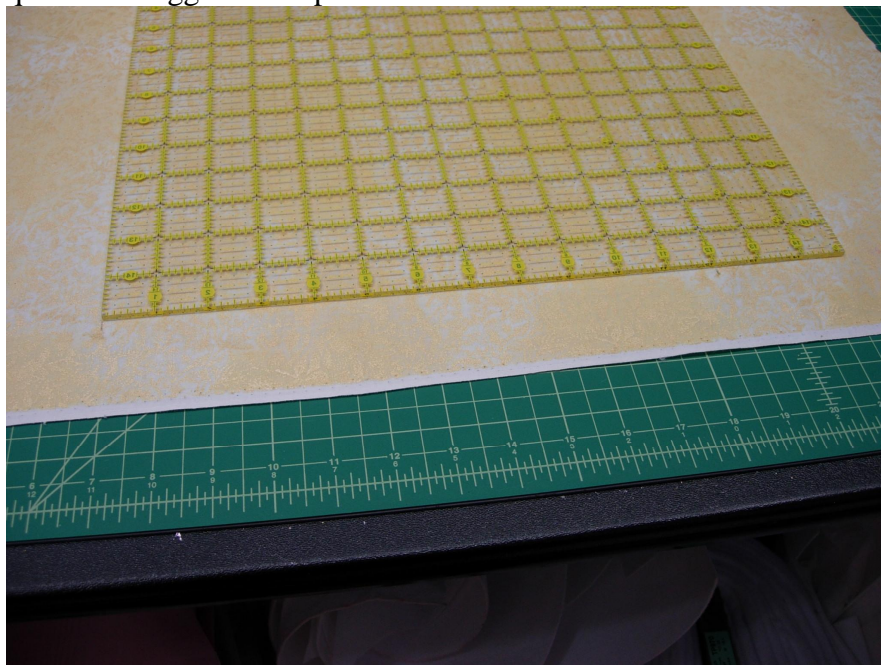


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3. Mark the finished dimensions of your project on your fabric. I always like to make my background quite a bit bigger than I plan to have it when finished so I can decide where I want to place my designs.



4. Begin to build your background – Place your Angelina fibers on your background. I left the center of my fabric fairly clear since it will be embroidered. I didn't use anything to hold my layers in place since they all kind of *stuck together* and I plan to embroider it right away. If you are using *slippery* materials, you can use temporary spray or a dot here and there from a fabric glue stick.



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5. The next layer I added is a fine tulle with gold metallic dots. Fabrics like this are often sold at Christmas and I like to stock up of various kinds and colors. You don't need much to make a big impact!



6. The next layer I used the Gold Metallic Mesh we now have on Stash. I just cut a random corner piece. I also had a very small scrap from another project and I put this on there too.

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7. The final step holds everything together. I used a pale yellow crystal organza. Make sure your last layer total covers the area you will use – you need this to hold things well.



The Organza mutes everything. If you would prefer more of the sparkle to show through, use some tulle instead. Though even with the organza, this background has a lot of sparkle – especially as you move in front of it.

Pin everything together well. Then stitch around the outside to hold things in place. Use this fabric for your background.

If you are going to quilt your project, you can just add a couple of basting lines here and there to hold the layers together while you embroider. If you aren't going to be quilting your project, you can stitch on top of all the layers. You can use regular stippling, just wavy lines – circles – even a *cross hatching* effect with horizontal and vertical lines. No rules!

IDEAS FOR OTHER MATERIALS TO ADD TO YOUR BACKGROUNDS

All kinds of tulle, netting and organza. You can build layers of any of these to get a shaded effect. Cut a corner piece, then one a little bigger, and another a little bigger. Place them on top of each other – the color will be deeper in the corner and phase out. Small pieces of other fabrics, lames, metallic prints. All kinds of yarn and fibers. You can make squiggly lines with them, or just cut small pieces and scatter them randomly. You can even add sequins (be careful not to have them where you will embroider).

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