

Personalized Family Tree

Families are amazing things. Big or small, across the ocean or close to home, it's always part of who you are. The idea of a "family tree" is one that has existed for ages. The thing is it's a tricky thing to standardize. All families are different shapes and sizes... how do you make a design that can stretch to all families? Well, it's easy if it's a ["tree" you grow yourself!](#) I'll show you how to start your little family tree, then grow it to whatever size you need. Then you just stitch the names of your family on top, and you have an embroidered heirloom that will last generations.

Supplies

Your heirloom piece may turn into a pillow, or a wall hanging, or a quilt, or whatever means the most to your family, so I'll just cover how to build and assemble your tree. What you



Steps To Complete



Begin by hooping up your fabric with your cutaway stabilizer. You're going to load up the first part of the design, which is a tree with a few leaves on it.



A note: if you're making a really big tree, you may want to start this design a little lower on your fabric so it has room to grow its "leaves."

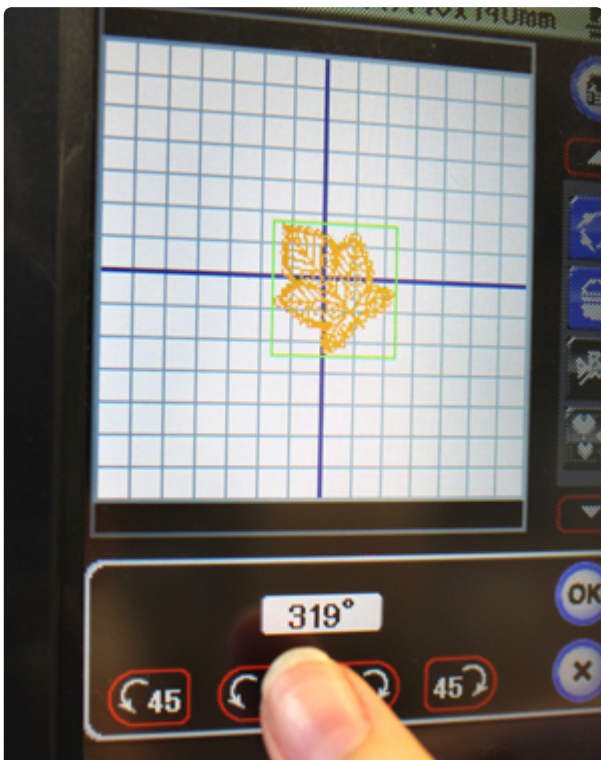


This is the first part of the design done. Of course, this is a perfectly charming design on its own, and you could just leave it here...

...but families need room to grow!



Re-hoop your fabric so you've got some space around the edges of your leaves. Take one of your printed templates and position it to start adding some foliage.



Make sure the little leaf design you're loading is the same as the template you've chosen.

Arranging these takes a little bit of finesse, but you never have to get it perfect. All it needs to do is overlap a little. On many machines, you should be able to adjust the tilt of a design so you don't have to re-hoop each time.

Once your little leaf is set and ready, stitch it onto the tapestry of leaves that has already begun.

Easy! One little leaf added.



Now grab a different leaf template, and add that to the next little area of open space on your tree. Load up the file and stitch your next leaf in place.

Building your tree is that easy, and that organic. Things don't need to be perfect; the nature of a tree isn't symmetrical.



You can keep adding more and more leaves until your tree is as large as you need it to be.

Really, there's no limit to how big your tree can get, likely only a limit on your patience for stitching leaves!

When your tree is done, you can simply stitch your family name at the trunk, or get even more personal with the names of your family members. For the words, I happened to use the smallest size of [Embroidery Library's Hana Alphabet](#). You can easily use text on your machine too; nearly all machines come with a few built-in fonts. If you're a bit afraid of stitching directly on your tree, stitch the names on a separate fabric and "patch" them on after.



This is my little family tree, with the names of my parents and my siblings. Yours may be as small as this, or may grow to become a tapestry of names and stitched foliage to mark the history of your own family!



You can turn your stitched heirloom into anything you like, from a simple pillow to a giant quilt. Family trees like this make an excellent gift, from the birthday of the matriarch to a baby shower at the start of a brand new tree. Commemorate your own family with something that is as unique as they are.

And c'mon, I bet your family is pretty darn unique.