Tips for Small Lettering

Making small lettering look good is one of the most challenging aspects of embroidery design. Pulse software users can simply select one of the many small lettering embroidery fonts (one size only stitch fonts), like Miniato 4mm or Staccato 7mm. These fonts are ideal since they are specifically designed to handle the problems associated with small lettering. Use the following tips to improve the quality of any small lettering.

Machine Settings:
Approximate speed of 400 stitches per minute or less.

Needle Size:
Use the smallest needle possible: 65/9 sharp or a 70/10 sharp.

Thread:
Use a lighter weight thread such as 50-weight cotton or 60-weight rayon.

Hoop:
Use the smallest hoop that will fit the design properly.

Backing:
Use extra backing. Add a heavy piece of tear away to make the letters look cleaner.

Spray Adhesive:
Use spray adhesive to secure the backing to thin fabrics.

Water-Soluble Film:
If possible, use water-soluble film. However, be sure to remove it with steam. If you remove it with water, it is more likely to get stuck inside the letters.

Using Normal Embroidery Fonts for Small Lettering:
If you wish, you can reduce a normal embroidery font below the minimum recommended height. No general settings can be applied to all fonts, but through a trial and error process, your lettering can be as legible as normal sized fonts.

General Segment Settings:
- Decrease density: Some fonts need less density to work nicely at a reduced height. Block can be reduced to 6mm if the density is 3.3 pt. Euroserif and Eurostyle can also be reduced but look best at a density of 2.4pt with a height of 6.6mm.
- Add Pull Compensation: Start with a Percentage value of 115% and go up by 5% intervals. This will widen the columns.
- Use 2 lines of perpendicular underlay inset at 0.4 mm
- Vary the height in order to assist the stitch generation. If gaps appear in the lettering, increase the font height slightly.

Suitable Width for Satin Stitches:
When experimenting, remember that satin stitches (like those used in most lettering) look best at a width of 1.2 mm to 12 mm. Below this range, threads tend to bunch (try a bean stitch) and above this they produce very long stitches (try a fill pattern font).

Other Pointers:
When selecting a normal embroidery font, remember the following:
- Serif and most monogram fonts should not be sewn below the recommended minimum height in order to avoid tiny short stitches. For example, the narrow shape of the serif should not be less than 1.2 mm.
- Script fonts are difficult due to the short stitching in the curved areas so they can not be reduced as much as block fonts.
- Avoid using Fill Box justification. This will distort the letters from their original punched shape. At larger heights, this is okay, but for small lettering this could result in columns that are much too narrow.
- True Type Fonts are excellent for sewing at large sizes but are unlikely to sew well at small sizes.