



Heart & Leaf Appliqué – Quilt Block Tutorial

Finished Block Size: 30 cm x 30 cm (12" x 12")

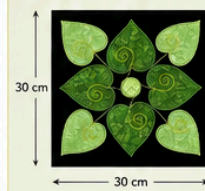
A beautiful and symmetrical appliqué block using heart-shaped leaves, spiral embroidery, and a center circle. Perfect for quilts, pillows, and wall hangings.



MATERIALS

- Cotton fabric (100%):
 - Dark green (Leaf center): 20 x 20 cm
 - Medium green (Leaves): 20 x 20 cm
 - Light green (Hearts): 20 x 20 cm
 - Light green (Center circle): 5 x 5 cm
 - Background fabric (Black): 35 x 35 cm
- Fusible web (Wonder Under) or needle-turn appliqué
- Embroidery thread (gold/yellow and green)
- Quilting thread (matching colors)
- Batting: 35 x 35 cm
- Backing fabric: 35 x 35 cm
- Basic sewing supplies

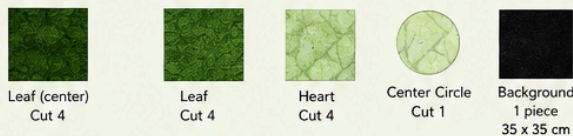
FINISHED SIZE



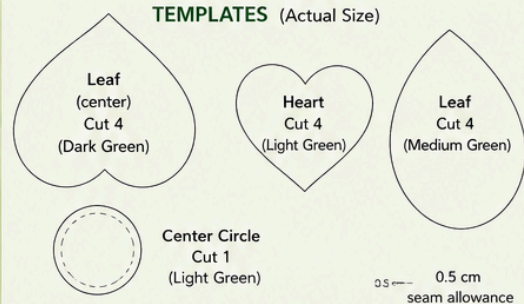
SEAM ALLOWANCE

Use 0.5 cm seam allowance (1/4 inch) for all pieces.

CUTTING GUIDE (Add 0.5 cm seam allowance to templates)



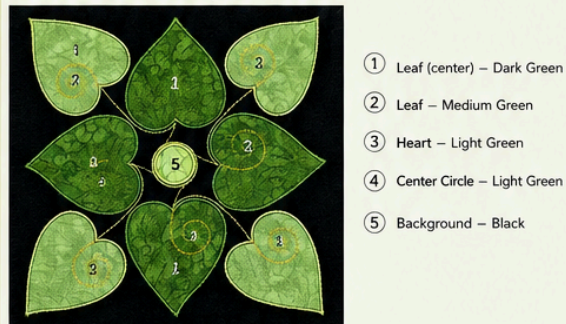
TEMPLATES (Actual Size)



STEP-BY-STEP INSTRUCTIONS

- 1. Prepare Templates**
Print or draw the templates. Add 0.5 cm seam allowance around each shape. Cut the fabric pieces following the templates.
- 2. Appliqué the Pieces**
Use fusible web or needle-turn appliqué. Place the pieces on the background fabric (35 x 35 cm) following the layout below. Press or pin in place.
- 3. Appliqué in Place**
Secure all pieces using your preferred method:
 - Zigzag stitch
 - Blanket stitch
 - or Invisible stitch (needle-turn)
- 4. Embroidery (Spirals)**
Use gold/yellow thread to embroider a spiral inside each leaf and heart. Use backstitch or stem stitch.
- 5. Center Circle**
Appliqué the center circle in the middle. Embroider around the edge if desired.
- 6. Quilting**
Sandwich the block: Top (appliqué) + Batting + Backing. Quilt around the shapes or echo quilt the design.
- 8. Finished!**
Your Heart & Leaf Appliqué Block is ready to use in quilts, pillows, table runners, or wall hangings!

ASSEMBLY LAYOUT (Placement Guide)



QUILTING & SEWING METHODS (USA Standards)

- Appliqué (Fusible Web)**
Fuse the fabric to the background, then sew around the edges.
- Blanket Stitch**
Decorative stitch often used for appliqué edges.
- Invisible (Needle-Turn) Appliqué**
Fold the edge under and stitch invisibly for a clean finish.
- Backstitch (for Embroidery)**
Strong stitch for outlines and spirals.
- Stem Stitch**
Ideal for curved lines like spirals.
- Echo Quilting**
Quilt around the shapes to add dimension.

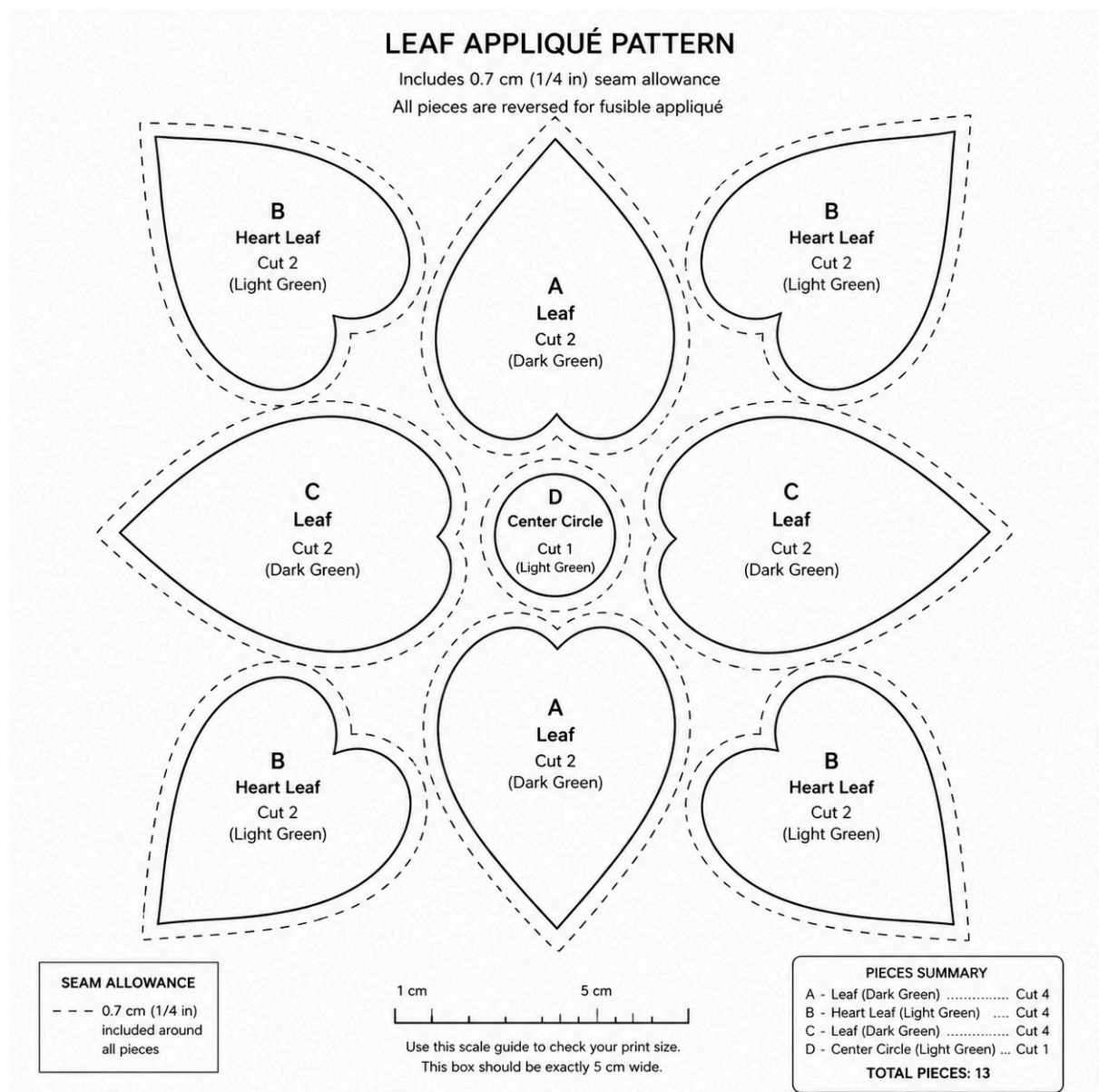
TIPS

- Use high-contrast colors for a bold look.
- Press each piece before appliqué for a crisp finish.
- Take your time with embroidery for beautiful spirals.

CARE INSTRUCTIONS



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Heart & Leaf Appliqué Quilt Block Tutorial

The Heart & Leaf Appliqué Quilt Block is a symmetrical 12-inch quilt block made with heart-shaped leaves, pointed leaves, spiral embroidery, and a small center circle. The combination

of light, medium, and dark green fabrics creates a layered botanical design that looks especially striking against a black background.

This finished block measures approximately 12 × 12 inches, or 30 × 30 cm. It can be used as a decorative wall hanging, pillow front, table runner panel, tote bag accent, or part of a larger botanical quilt.

The project can be completed with fusible-web appliqué, which is beginner-friendly, or with traditional needle-turn appliqué. The instructions below primarily explain the fusible-web method while also including guidance for hand appliqué.

Materials and Supplies

You will need the following fabrics and supplies:

- Dark green cotton fabric for the center leaves: one 8 × 8-inch piece, or 20 × 20 cm
- Medium green cotton fabric for the pointed leaves: one 8 × 8-inch piece, or 20 × 20 cm
- Light green cotton fabric for the heart-shaped leaves: one 8 × 8-inch piece, or 20 × 20 cm
- Light green cotton fabric for the center circle: one 2 × 2-inch piece, or 5 × 5 cm
- Black cotton fabric for the background: one 14 × 14-inch piece, or 35 × 35 cm
- Fusible web, such as Wonder Under, HeatnBond Lite, or a similar lightweight product
- Gold or yellow embroidery floss
- Green embroidery or sewing thread
- Coordinating appliqué thread
- Quilting thread
- One 14 × 14-inch piece of batting
- One 14 × 14-inch piece of backing fabric

- Template paper or lightweight cardboard
- Fabric scissors
- Paper scissors
- Fine-tip fabric marker or chalk pencil
- Straight pins
- Iron and ironing surface
- Sewing machine
- Hand-sewing needle
- Embroidery needle
- Rotary cutter, acrylic ruler, and cutting mat
- Optional lightbox or bright window for tracing

Prewash and press the cotton fabrics before beginning. Prewashing helps prevent uneven shrinking after the finished block is cleaned.

Use tightly woven quilting cotton whenever possible. The black background should be solid or very subtly patterned so that the green appliqué pieces remain the main focus.

Understanding the Block Layout

The design contains three main appliqué shapes and one center circle.

The first shape is the large dark green center leaf. It resembles a pointed leaf with a gently rounded base. Cut four of these pieces.

The second shape is the medium green leaf. It is narrower and more elongated than the center leaf. Cut four pieces.

The third shape is the light green heart. This shape creates the four outer corners of the design. Cut four pieces.

The fourth shape is the light green center circle. Cut one circle.

The four dark green center leaves form the inner floral or pinwheel-like section of the block. Their pointed ends face outward, and their rounded ends meet near the center.

The four medium green leaves are placed between the dark green center leaves. They point toward the upper, lower, left, and right sides of the block.

The four light green hearts are positioned near the four corners. Their pointed ends face toward the center of the block, while the rounded lobes face outward.

The small circle covers the center where the inner pieces meet. It creates a clean focal point and hides any minor alignment gaps.

Prepare the Templates

Print or draw the templates at actual size.

The finished block in the graphic uses shapes approximately large enough to fill a 12-inch square while leaving a narrow black border around the design. Before cutting fabric, test the paper templates on a 12-inch square of paper.

For fusible-web appliqué, the template usually represents the finished size of the shape. Trace the template onto the paper side of the fusible web without adding a seam allowance.

For needle-turn appliqué, add a ¼-inch seam allowance, approximately 0.5 cm, around each template.

Label every template clearly:

- Center Leaf — Cut 4 — Dark Green
- Leaf — Cut 4 — Medium Green
- Heart — Cut 4 — Light Green
- Center Circle — Cut 1 — Light Green

Remember that fusible-web templates are normally traced in reverse. The leaf and heart shapes are mostly symmetrical, so reversing is not highly noticeable, but tracing them in reverse is still a good appliqué habit.

Cut the paper templates apart, leaving a small amount of paper around each drawn line. Do not cut exactly on the line yet.

Cut and Prepare the Background

Cut the black background fabric into a 14 × 14-inch square, or approximately 35 × 35 cm.

The extra size provides room for quilting and squaring the block after all stitching is complete.

Press the background carefully to remove wrinkles. A flat background makes accurate appliqué placement much easier.

Fold the background in half vertically and press lightly with your fingers. Open it, fold it horizontally, and finger-press again.

You may also fold it diagonally in both directions. These temporary creases create placement guides without permanently marking the fabric.

The exact center of the square is where all of the alignment lines cross.

Avoid making deep ironed creases in the black fabric because they may remain visible after quilting. Finger-pressing is usually sufficient.

Prepare the Fusible-Web Appliqué Pieces

Place the fusible web with the paper side facing upward.

Trace four center leaves, four medium leaves, four hearts, and one circle onto the paper side. Leave at least $\frac{1}{2}$ inch between the shapes.

Rough-cut around each traced shape, leaving approximately $\frac{1}{8}$ to $\frac{1}{4}$ inch outside the traced line.

Place each rough-cut fusible shape adhesive-side down on the wrong side of its corresponding fabric.

Fuse the pieces according to the manufacturer's instructions. Most lightweight fusible-web products require a dry iron and only a few seconds of heat.

Do not hold the iron in one location for too long. Excessive heat may stiffen the appliqué or cause the adhesive to seep through the fabric.

Allow the fused fabric to cool completely.

Cut each piece exactly on the traced line using sharp fabric scissors.

Carefully remove the paper backing. A thin layer of adhesive should remain attached to the wrong side of each fabric shape.

Keep the pieces organized in four groups so that the colors and shapes are not accidentally mixed.

Alternative Needle-Turn Appliqué Preparation

For traditional needle-turn appliqué, trace each finished-size template onto template plastic or lightweight cardboard.

Cut the templates exactly on the drawn lines.

Place each template on the wrong side of the correct fabric and trace around it.

Add a ¼-inch seam allowance around the outside of each traced shape before cutting the fabric.

Clip carefully into the inner curves of the heart lobes. Do not cut through the finished stitching line.

Make small clips around deep curves and reduce bulky seam allowances near sharp points.

The edges will be turned under along the traced finished line as the pieces are hand-sewn to the background.

The center circle may be prepared with a heat-resistant circle template. Run a gathering stitch around the seam allowance, place the template in the center, pull the thread, and press the seam allowance around the template.

Remove the template after the circle has cooled.

Arrange the Dark Green Center Leaves

Place the four dark green center leaves around the marked center of the black background.

Position one leaf pointing upward, one downward, one to the left, and one to the right.

The narrow pointed ends should face outward. The rounded lower ends should meet near the center.

Check that the distance between each leaf and the edge of the background is consistent.

The four leaves should create a balanced cross or floral shape.

Do not fuse the pieces immediately. Step back and look at the block from a distance.

Measure from the points of the leaves to the edges of the black square. Adjust until the design is centered.

Pin the pieces temporarily or press them lightly with the tip of the iron to prevent movement while the remaining shapes are arranged.

Add the Medium Green Leaves

Place one medium green leaf between each pair of dark green center leaves.

These four leaves should fill the diagonal spaces of the inner design.

Rotate the leaves so that their pointed ends face outward and their rounded ends face the center.

The medium green leaves should not completely cover the dark green leaves. A small amount of black background should remain visible between most shapes.

Maintain equal spacing on all four sides.

The top-left, top-right, bottom-left, and bottom-right sections should mirror one another.

If one leaf appears too close to the center, adjust all four rather than correcting only one. Symmetry is important in this design.

Position the Light Green Hearts

Place one light green heart near each corner of the block.

The point of each heart should face inward toward the center circle.

The two rounded lobes should face the outer corner.

Leave a narrow margin of black fabric between the hearts and the outer edges of the finished 12-inch block.

The heart shapes may slightly overlap the visual space of the neighboring leaves, but the edges should remain distinct.

Check that all four hearts are rotated at matching angles.

Measure from the outer curves of the hearts to the background edges to keep the placement consistent.

The heart points should aim directly toward the center rather than leaning toward one side.

Add the Center Circle

Place the light green circle directly over the meeting point of the inner appliqué pieces.

The circle should cover the rounded ends of the leaves and any small gaps at the center.

Check the position using the horizontal and vertical center creases.

The circle should appear equally surrounded by all four dark green center leaves.

The finished center circle is relatively small, approximately 2 inches or less in diameter, depending on the scale of your templates.

Do not make the circle too large, or it may hide too much of the surrounding leaf design.

Once the center circle is correctly positioned, the complete arrangement should resemble a symmetrical botanical medallion.

Fuse the Appliqué in Place

After confirming the full layout, remove any temporary pins that are not suitable for ironing.

Follow the fusible-web manufacturer's temperature instructions.

Begin with the four dark green center leaves.

Press each shape without sliding the iron. Sliding can distort or shift the pieces.

Next, fuse the four medium green leaves.

Fuse the four light green hearts after checking their angles one final time.

Fuse the center circle last.

Use a pressing cloth if required by the fusible-web manufacturer.

Allow the block to cool on a flat surface before moving it.

Inspect every edge. If an edge has not bonded completely, press it again briefly.

Avoid repeatedly reheating the entire block because excessive heat may make the fabric stiff.

Stitch Around the Appliqué Shapes

Even when fusible web is used, stitching around the appliqué edges is recommended. Stitching creates a finished appearance and prevents the shapes from lifting after washing.

A narrow blanket stitch is an excellent choice for this block. Use coordinating green thread or a slightly contrasting thread that outlines each shape.

Set the machine to a small blanket stitch. Test the settings on a fabric scrap before sewing the actual block.

Keep the straight portion of the blanket stitch just outside the appliqué edge. The horizontal bite of the stitch should enter the appliqué fabric.

Begin stitching on a straight or gently curved area rather than at a sharp point.

When turning around curves, stop with the needle down, lift the presser foot, rotate the fabric slightly, and continue.

For outer points, stitch to the tip, stop with the needle down in the background, lift the presser foot, and pivot.

For inward curves, such as the indentation at the top of the heart, take smaller stitches and pivot frequently.

Alternative edge finishes include a narrow zigzag stitch, satin stitch, raw-edge straight stitch, or hand-worked blanket stitch.

For needle-turn appliqué, use a fine hand-sewing needle and matching thread. Turn under a small section of seam allowance at a time and use tiny invisible stitches.

Embroider the Spiral Designs

The gold or yellow spiral embroidery is one of the most distinctive details of the block.

Lightly draw a spiral in the center of each heart and each large leaf.

The spiral should begin near the center of the appliqué and curve outward without reaching the stitched edge.

Use a removable fabric marker, chalk pencil, or water-soluble pen. Test the marking tool on a scrap first.

Thread an embroidery needle with two or three strands of gold or yellow embroidery floss.

Use a backstitch for a strong, clearly defined spiral.

Bring the needle up at the beginning of the marked spiral.

Take a small backward stitch along the line.

Bring the needle up again a short distance ahead of the previous stitch.

Insert the needle into the end of the previous stitch to create a continuous line.

Continue until the full spiral is embroidered.

Keep the stitches short around tight curves. Slightly longer stitches may be used on the wider outer portion of the spiral.

A stem stitch may also be used. Stem stitch produces a smooth, slightly twisted line that works especially well for curved embroidery.

To create a stem stitch, bring the needle up at the beginning of the line, take a short forward stitch, and bring the needle back up halfway along that stitch.

Keep the working thread consistently on the same side of the stitched line.

Embroider spirals on all four dark green center leaves, all four medium green leaves, and all four light green hearts.

The center circle may be quilted or embroidered with simple curved segments, as shown in the original design.

Secure the embroidery threads neatly on the back without making bulky knots.

Embroider the Center Circle

Outline the center circle with coordinating green or gold thread.

Use a backstitch, stem stitch, or small running stitch.

Add several curved lines inside the circle to create a segmented leaf or petal effect.

Begin by stitching a gently curved vertical line through the center.

Add two or three diagonal or curved lines that meet the main line.

The internal stitching does not need to be extremely detailed. Its purpose is to add texture and connect the circle visually with the surrounding leaves.

Keep the embroidery balanced and avoid placing too many stitches in the small area.

Press the completed embroidery from the wrong side on a padded surface.

Placing the block face-down on a folded towel prevents the raised embroidery from becoming flattened.

Prepare the Quilt Sandwich

Place the backing fabric on a clean work surface with the wrong side facing upward.

Center the batting over the backing.

Place the appliquéd background on top with the right side facing upward.

The three layers should form a quilt sandwich:

- Appliqué top
- Batting
- Backing

Smooth all three layers from the center outward.

Make sure there are no wrinkles in the backing.

Baste the layers with safety pins, basting spray, or long hand-basting stitches.

Begin basting near the center and work toward the outside.

Keep the block flat during this process so that the appliqué does not become distorted.

Quilt Around the Appliqué Shapes

Quilt close to the outside edge of each appliqué shape.

This technique is sometimes called outline quilting or echo quilting.

Use black thread for subtle quilting on the background or coordinating green thread for a more decorative effect.

Begin by quilting approximately $\frac{1}{8}$ inch outside the appliqué edges.

Follow the shape of each leaf and heart carefully.

Quilt slowly around the heart indentations and pointed leaf tips.

You may add a second line of echo quilting approximately $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ inch outside the first line.

Additional quilting may be added in the black background using gentle curves, spirals, or radiating lines.

Avoid leaving large unquilted areas because the batting may shift over time.

Quilt around the center circle as well.

Check the back frequently for folds, thread nests, or puckers.

When the quilting is complete, bury or secure the thread ends.

Square the Finished Block

Place the quilted block on a cutting mat.

Use a large square ruler to locate the center of the design.

Trim the block to $12\frac{1}{2} \times 12\frac{1}{2}$ inches when it will be sewn into a quilt using a standard $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch seam allowance.

After being sewn into a quilt, the visible finished block will measure 12×12 inches.

For a standalone 12-inch finished wall block, trim according to the finishing method you plan to use.

Check that the heart points and leaf points remain evenly spaced from the trimmed edges.

Trim one side at a time.

Rotate the block carefully and confirm that each corner forms a true 90-degree angle.

Do not trim too close to the appliqué pieces.

Finish the Block as a Wall Hanging

To turn the block into a small wall hanging, prepare double-fold binding.

Cut binding strips approximately $2\frac{1}{4}$ to $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches wide.

Join the strips with diagonal seams.

Press the binding in half lengthwise with the wrong sides together.

Sew the binding to the front of the quilt using a ¼-inch seam allowance.

Miter the corners as you sew.

Join the binding ends neatly.

Fold the binding over the raw edges to the back.

Hand-stitch the folded edge to the backing using a blind stitch.

Add a hanging sleeve to the upper back edge if desired.

The finished wall hanging can be displayed with a small wooden dowel or quilt hanger.

Turn the Block Into a Pillow

To use the design as a pillow front, square the block to the desired pillow size.

A quilted 12½-inch block works well for a compact decorative pillow.

Prepare an envelope-style or zippered pillow back.

For an envelope back, cut two backing rectangles that overlap by at least 4 inches.

Hem one long edge of each backing piece.

Place the pillow front right-side up.

Position the two backing pieces right-side down over the pillow front.

Pin around all four sides.

Sew around the perimeter using a ¼-inch or ½-inch seam allowance, depending on the desired finished size.

Finish the raw edges with a zigzag stitch or serger.

Turn the pillow cover right-side out and press the corners gently.

Insert the pillow form.

Use the Block in a Larger Quilt

The block can be repeated to create a larger botanical quilt.

Rotate alternating blocks to produce a secondary circular pattern.

Use plain black sashing between the blocks for a dramatic stained-glass appearance.

Green, cream, or gold sashing will create a softer design.

Because the appliqué extends close to the sides, sashing is helpful for preventing neighboring motifs from appearing crowded.

Make every block slightly oversized and trim them only after appliqué and quilting are complete.

Use the same templates for all blocks to maintain consistency.

You may vary the green fabrics from block to block while keeping the black background constant.

For a scrappy version, use several shades of green within each shape category.

Appliqué and Sewing Methods

Fusible-web appliqué uses a heat-activated adhesive to hold the fabric shapes on the background. After fusing, the raw edges are stitched by machine or hand. This is the fastest method and is suitable for beginners.

Blanket stitch is a decorative edge stitch commonly used around appliqué shapes. One part of the stitch follows the background, while a short perpendicular stitch enters the appliqué.

Zigzag stitch secures the raw edge with closely spaced diagonal stitches. A narrow zigzag creates a delicate outline, while a dense zigzag resembles satin stitch.

Needle-turn appliqué is a traditional hand-sewing method. The seam allowance is turned under with the needle immediately before each section is stitched.

Backstitch produces a solid embroidered line and is ideal for the gold spirals.

Stem stitch forms a smooth, rope-like line that follows curves naturally.

Echo quilting repeats the outline of an appliqué shape in the surrounding background.

Tips for a Professional Finish

Choose green fabrics with enough contrast to keep each section visible. The dark center leaves, medium leaves, and light hearts should be clearly distinguishable.

Use a true black or very dark background for the strongest contrast.

Press each appliqué piece before fusing it to the block.

Keep the iron stationary while fusing. Sliding the iron may stretch the leaves or shift their placement.

Test the blanket stitch on a scrap containing the same background, appliqué fabric, fusible web, and batting.

Use a stabilizer behind the block during dense decorative stitching if the fabric begins to pucker.

Reduce the stitch length near sharp points and tight curves.

Use an open-toe appliqué foot for better visibility.

Rotate the block frequently rather than forcing the fabric around the needle.

Embroider slowly and keep the spirals similar in size, but do not worry about making them perfectly identical. Small variations add handmade character.

Press from the wrong side after embroidery.

Square the block only after all quilting is finished.

Care Instructions

Hand washing in cold water is the gentlest cleaning method for a finished appliqué wall hanging.

Use a mild detergent without bleach.

Do not wring or twist the quilted block.

Rinse thoroughly in cool water.

Press the piece gently between clean towels to remove excess moisture.

Lay it flat to dry.

If ironing is necessary, use a low setting.

Place a pressing cloth over the appliqué and embroidery.

Iron from the wrong side whenever possible.

Avoid pressing directly on raised embroidery stitches.

Do not use chlorine bleach because it may damage the green fabrics, black background, and embroidery floss.

Final Result

Your completed Heart & Leaf Appliqué Quilt Block should measure approximately 12 × 12 inches after finishing. The design will contain four dark green center leaves, four medium green pointed leaves, four light green hearts, and one light green center circle.

The gold spiral embroidery gives the leaves movement and warmth, while the black background emphasizes the symmetry of the design.

This project is detailed enough to create an impressive decorative centerpiece but remains manageable for a confident beginner. By preparing accurate templates, arranging the shapes carefully, stitching slowly around the curves, and quilting evenly, you can create a polished block suitable for quilts, pillows, bags, table décor, or wall hangings.

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