

Embroidery Machines Support

How to Hoop a Cap Using the 270 Degree Wide Cap Frame

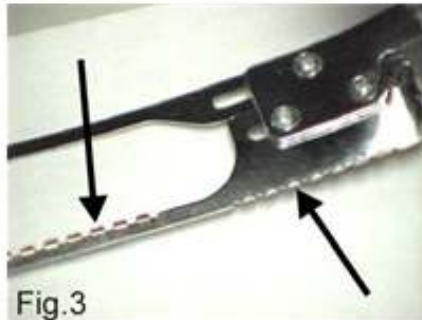
Using the wide cap frames for the embroidery machine is not a difficult task. With practice, you can learn to frame caps quickly and easily, delivering high quality embroidery. Many of the problems experienced by embroiderers sewing on caps can be traced to the way in which the caps were hooped in the cap frames. The following document illustrates the key points to look for when hooping a cap. These instructions are not necessarily the only way in which to perform this task, but merely a way of pointing out what to look for. As you become more proficient at this, you may discover ways that are easier for you.

For our example, we have chosen a low profile, unstructured cap. This seems to be the popular type of cap at this time. However, regardless of the type of cap to be embroidered, these steps and key points remain the same.

In Figure 1, we have unbuckled the strap for easier handling. For caps with leather straps, this is especially helpful. By undoing the strap, it allows for a larger opening which will make it easier to place the cap on the frame. Even caps with plastic straps will benefit from loosening the strap.



Before we place the cap in the frame, let us first examine the cap frame itself. The cap frame is composed of two pieces. First is the round part called the cap frame base. Around the edge of the base you will notice some small teeth (see Fig.2). The inside edge of the seam joining the sweatband to the crown will line up with these teeth. Attached to the base on a hinge is the second part of the cap frame called the strap. Here too you will notice the same type of small teeth as on the cap frame base (see Fig.3).



The function of these teeth is to grip the outside of the seam that joins the sweatband to the crown. Lining up these teeth on the inside and outside of the cap is probably the most critical point in framing a cap. This will be illustrated later in this document.

Next, because we are using an unstructured cap, it is necessary to use a backing. Without backing, your design has a very poor chance of sewing out correctly. You will probably experience poor quality in lettering and almost certainly have registration (shifting) problems. Structured caps have a fused backing already in place. These types of caps may not require backing except in the case of side embroideries, in which case you should cut one long piece instead of trying to insert individual pieces for the sides. In our example, we are using a heavy cut away backing that is available in a 4 wide roll that can be cut to any length you need.

After placing the cap frame on the framing gauge, lay the backing in place on top of the frame as seen in Figure 4. Be sure to slide the backing underneath the alignment bracket. This is the small tab with the thin red line marked on the top. (This is for centering the cap left and right in the cap frame.) Now roll out the sweatband and slide the cap over the backing and all the way up so that the sweatband goes underneath the bracket also (see Figures 5 and 6). Also, make sure as you place the cap on the frame that the two posts at the bottom of the base go inside the cap (see Figure 4 again). These posts are used to clamp the sides of the cap with



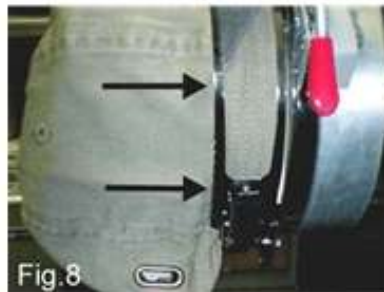
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the cap frame clips later. The issue here is to try and keep the sweatband rolled out and flat as far around the cap frame base as possible. Before pulling the strap over, try to make sure the seam for the sweatband is lined up along the teeth of the base that were shown in Figure 2.



Once you have the seam lined up on the teeth of the base, bring the strap up and over the bill. As you bring it over and around the cap, line the teeth of the strap up with the seam. When the strap is lined up on the seam, continue around the cap until you can connect the catch to the hook of the base. Do not close the latch completely until you have the seams aligned on both sides and the cap is centered. Use the red line on the alignment bracket as the reference for centering. In Figures 7 and 8, the strap is shown in the correct position on the left and right sides of the cap.



As mentioned before, this step is probably the most critical in framing a cap. If you do not keep the seams aligned with the teeth of the base and strap, your side embroideries will not sew out straight. That is, they will tilt at an angle to the seam of the cap. Figure 9 shows the seam and strap incorrectly aligned.

Now that you have the cap in the frame and correctly aligned, you will need to clip the side panels to smooth out any wrinkles on either side. The important thing to remember here is to smooth the side with a minimum of stretching. If you stretch the sides too tight, the clips may pop off during the side embroidery. This would allow the cap to shift during sewing and cause poor embroidery. This can happen too fast for you to react and stop the machine.

With this cap, we have a metal grommet for the leather strap to work around (see Figure 10). This means that we can probably only use one clip on this side (see Figure 11). This is acceptable, but it may cause some difficulty in smoothing out this side of the cap. Remember the goal on the sides is smoothing out the wrinkles, not stretching the fabric.



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In Figure 12, the left side of the cap is shown with the clips in place. Without the grommet, two clips can be used. Whether you use one or two clips is not important. What is important is that the sides are smooth. While it may be impossible to get the sides absolutely smooth, the fewer wrinkles you have, the better your embroidery will turn out.



Fig. 12

Finally, in Figures 13 and 14, we show the framed cap, ready to be placed on the machine for embroidering.



Fig. 13



Fig. 14