

KISS-Cut

Tips & Tricks



The term *KISS-Cut* is a relatively new word to the embroidery industry. It was inspired by the word **Contour Cut** but in reality that only makes up half of the actual definition. A true KISS-Cut is when two or more pieces of fabric are fused together then each layer is cut independent of one another. This can be a challenging task, but with the Ioline Appli-K, 300 System and 350HF cutters it's a snap. In this article I hope to teach you a few tips and tricks that I have come up with for making the perfect KISS-Cut.

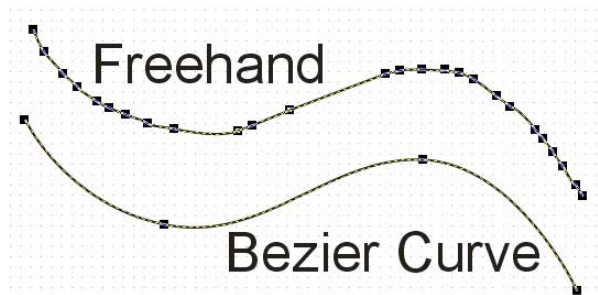
I will assume you know how to use CorelDraw and perform basic drawing functions, along with using the Ioline 301 software and cutting on the Ioline flatbed machines such as the Appli-K, 300 System, and 350HF cutters.

All KISS-Cuts start out as a design, whether on a napkin or a computer, the design of the cut file is crucial. I'll use CorelDraw 11 for this article however all versions of Corel are similar.

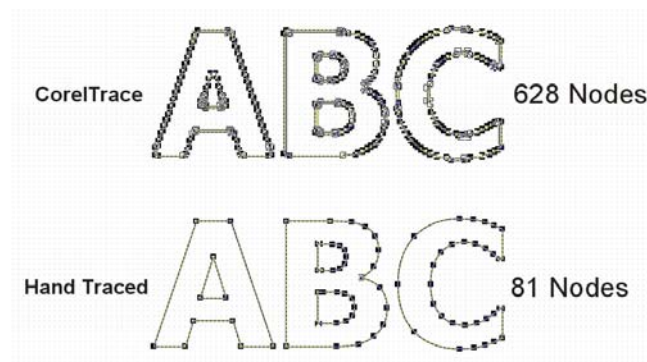
Digitizing Tips

Digitizing is simply the tracing of a scanned image (or "bitmap" such as a JPG or TIF file) that is imported into a vector-based program like *CorelDraw* or *Adobe Illustrator*. Using the drawing tools in the program you follow the design by drawing all the components in the image.

Tip: Always use the "Bezier Curve" tool  instead of the "Freehand" tool  for digitizing. The bezier curve tool uses fewer nodes and is much smoother than the freehand tool.



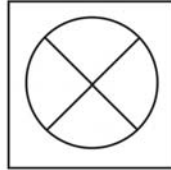
Tip: Using programs like *CorelTrace* is not a good idea because the results are never good enough. Node count is a big factor in the design and will make or break the quality of the cut.



Blade Depth Tips

Blade depth is crucial when cutting a KISS-Cut. If you cut through both layers it's not a KISS-Cut, it's an *appliqué* cut with duplicates. Setting the blade depth is easy and must be done for every different KISS-Cut design. To perform this procedure you will need a small 1" area of your layered twill.

- 1) With the blade holder in the machine turn the cap on the blade holder counter-clockwise (or left) until there is almost no blade protruding.
- 2) With the blade holder over the lower right corner of the twill press the "Test-Cut" button on the machine. It will cut this



- 3) You should be able to pull out the square first then each quarter of the circle.
- 4) If you can't remove any part of it then turn the cap on the blade holder clockwise (or right) about 1/2 turn. If you remove multiple layers of twill there is too much blade and the cap should be turned counter-clockwise (or left) 1/2 turn.
- 5) Press test-cut on the cutter.
- 6) Repeat step 3 until you are able to pull out one layer of twill and each piece can be removed one at a time. This can take a few tries to get right but hang in there.

Cutting Order Tips

Cutting order is probably the most important step because every design is different. Depending on the type of fabric you cut and the fusing material you use depends on the order of cutting. In an ideal world the best fabric to use for KISS-Cutting is **Stahl's pressure sensitive** twill because it has adhesive already on it. In reality not everyone can afford pressure sensitive twill so double-sided backing is used. Here are a few examples of cutting order (I will use a two layer KISS-cut for this example.)

Example #1 – Bottom Up – Using Stahl's pressure sensitive and heat sensitive twill (This method is the easiest because blade depth can be set and left alone while cutting.)

- 1) Place a piece of Heat sensitive (no backing paper) twill on the adhesive sheet with the shiny side up.
- 2) Cut the bottom layer from the 301 software (DO NOT remove the excess twill after cutting).
- 3) Place a piece of Stahl's pressure sensitive twill on top of the first layer by removing the paper backing and sticking it on top of the bottom piece of twill (shiny side up).
- 4) Cut the top layer of twill from the 301 software.
- 5) Remove both layers of twill.

Example #2 – Top Down – Using Stahl's heat sensitive twill only.

- 1) Heat-press your layers of twill together for about 2 seconds (or very little time so the layers can be pulled apart later).
- 2) Place on the adhesive sheet and cut the top layer from the 301 software.
- 3) Remove the excess twill from the top layer of twill.
- 4) With the remaining material cut the bottom layer of twill. You may need to adjust the cap on the blade holder to get a little more blade exposure.

Example #3 – Sticky Side up – This is used if you want the bottom layer to be Stahl’s pressure sensitive twill. The backing on the twill sticks to the adhesive sheet so cutting everything in reverse is the only way.

- 1) Place the “top” layer of twill upside-down so the shiny side is on the adhesive sheet and the backing is facing up.
- 2) Remove the paper backing from the twill.
- 3) In the 301 software click on the “Design Setup” button and choose *mirror* so the design is backwards. Cut the top layer of twill.
- 4) Place the “bottom” layer of twill upside-down so the shiny side is on the adhesive from the first layer. Note: If you are doing two layers you can leave the paper backing on this layer.
- 5) Cut the bottom layer of twill from the 301 software.

Example #4 – Fabric with backing – This method is used if your twill has no heat or pressure sensitive backing on it. Ioline makes a double-sided backing just for this purpose but this is the most complicated way to make a KISS-Cut because twill without a backing will tend to fray. Simply cut the backing material to the size of your fabric and heat press the *non-paper* side to the material. Follow the steps in Example #3 to perform the KISS-Cut.

Tip: If the bottom layer does not cut through all the way don’t press the “repeat” button. Pressing repeat will cut all the layers that had been cut previously.

Tip: Do not remove the blade holder while cutting. This will cause diagonal lines to cut across the table when the blade holder is put back in. This has to do with the machine keeping track of where it is compared to the blade offset.

Stitch creation tips

Creating stitches for a KISS-Cut is a little tricky. There is a certain order that must be maintained in order to get the results you are looking for. Follow these steps for a 2 layer KISS-Cut with a satin stitch around the bottom layer and a zig-zag stitch around the top layer.

- 1) In the 301 software start with the bottom layer and turn off the top layer.
- 2) Click on “Create Stitches” and mark the check box for placement stitch and satin stitch.
- 3) Click OK. You should see something like this.



- 4) Turn off the bottom layer and turn on the top layer.
- 5) Click on create stitches again and uncheck the placement and satin stitch.
- 6) Check the Zig-Zag stitch and press OK. You should see something like this.



- 7) Now turn on both layers in design setup and press OK.
- 8) You should now see something like this.



Tip: Unlike the traditional way of Kiss-Cutting it is not necessary to have a placement stitch for any other layer but the bottom layer of twill. The top layer is already stuck to the bottom so all that is needed is the zig-zag stitch for the top layer.

KISS-Cut

Advantages over the traditional method

The traditional method of KISS-Cutting was a very time consuming process and used a lot of stitching.

- First all the layers of twill are cut separately.
- Then a placement stitch was sewn on the garment and the bottom layer is heat-pressed, stuck or glued on.
- Apply the stitch around the border of the bottom layer along with the placement stitch for the next layer up.
- Glue, heat, or stick the top or next layer and apply the stitch around the border for that layer.
- This process would be repeated until all the layers are sewn.

In a world where every stitch costs money this wasn't a very effective or fast way to perform this task.

The Ioline method is much simpler.

- Cut the layers with the methods (shown above).
- Create the stitches you want for each layer in the 301 software (shown above).
- Save the sew disk.
- The placement stitch is sewn onto the garment.
- Heat-press, stick, or glue the full KISS-Cut onto the garment.

- Run the rest of the sew file through your embroidery machine.

All of the stitches you created in the 301 software will run and the embroidery machine won't stop until the whole thing is done. There is no need for multiple placement stitches or to stop the machine to apply more layers.