

## Stabilizers, Backings, and Toppings – Page 1

Type	Description	Fabric Type	Special Considerations
Adhesive Tearaway	A tearaway backing with an adhesive coating, which is protected by a peel-off paper.	Cottons or other woven non-stretch fabrics.	Can gum up needle. Can cause lint to be sticky, and adhere to inside of bobbin case area.
Cutaway	A backing which does not degrade when washed many times, and which must be trimmed away from the edges of the embroidery on the back side of the embroidered item.	Knit, fleece, or other stretchy fabrics.	Need to adhere to fabric before hooping. Should be hooped taut, but not stretched.
Heat Away	A backing that disintegrates into ashes when heated with an iron. Brush away the excess. It looks similar to off-white window screen.	Velvet, corduroy, and other fabrics that should not be wetted. Cutwork. Freestanding lace. Delicate fabrics.	Looks like muslin. Heat with dry iron and brush off the ashes after it disintegrates.
H2O Cutaway such as Hydrostick Cutaway or Wet-N-Set Cutaway	A cutaway that is coated with a dry starch-based adhesive, which is activated with water.	Knit, fleece, or other stretchy fabrics.	Does not gum up needle. Use when barely damp. The wetter it is, the stronger it holds the fabric. Can be rewetted from the back to release fabric. Can be patched and reused.
H2O Tearaway such as Hydrostick Tearaway or Wet-N-Set Tearaway	A tearaway that is coated with a dry starch-based adhesive, which is activated with water.	Cottons or other woven non-stretch fabrics.	Does not gum up needle. Use when barely damp. The wetter it is, the stronger it holds the fabric. Can be rewetted from the back to release fabric. Can be patched and reused.
No Show Nylon Mesh or Polymesh	A sheer nylon cutaway stabilizer. It's very light weight and has a cross-hatch pattern embossed in the surface.	Knits, fleece, or other stretchy fabrics. 3D designs. Use as a protective covering on the back over metallic stitches or on baby items.	Need to adhere with adhesive spray before hooping fabric. Hoop taut but not stretched.
No Show Nylon Mesh Fusible or Polymesh Fusible	A sheer nylon cutaway stabilizer that can be fused onto fabric with a low-temp iron. It's very light weight and has a cross-hatch pattern embossed in the surface.	Knits, fleece, or other stretchy fabrics. Use as a protective covering on the back over metallic stitches or on baby items.	Hoop taut but not stretched.
Tearaway	A paper-like backing which can degrade over time when washed. After stitching, tear the excess away from the back of the embroidered item.	Cotton or other woven, non-stretch fabrics	Degrades over several washings, and does not continue to stabilize. Great for woven fabrics, but designs can cave in if used on stretchy knits.

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Tulle and Bridal Netting	Polyester netting which is available in a wide range of colors, and can be used to hold down the pile of plush fabrics. Use a color close to the fabric, and it usually blends in and isn't seen.	Towels, polar fleece, fake fur, and other fabrics with pile.	Use as a topping to hold down loops. Tear away or trim away after embroidering. Will not wash away, but will continue to hold loops from working their way back up through the stitches.
Water Soluble backing such as Aqua Magic Vilene or Washaway	A water-soluble backing that dissolves on contact with water. It looks like the sheer nylon mesh with its crosshatch pattern. Vilene is fairly stable against stretch.	As a backing for free standing lace, very lightweight of flimsy fabrics where another backing would show, such as a scarf. As a topping for towels, polar fleece, fake fur, and other fabrics with pile	Rinse, but do not wring out lace designs. Pat dry between towels, then allow lace to air dry. Use as a topping to hold down loops. Adhere with adhesive spray or basting stitches. Will wash away, and loops can work their way back up through the embroidery design if it does not have a good underlayer of stitches.
Water Soluble backing such as Dissolve or Solvy	A gel-type of backing which dissolves on contact with water. It is clear or milky-white, stretches easily, and tears easily.	Free standing lace, very light-weight of flimsy fabrics where another backing would show, such as a scarf.	Rinse, but do not wring out lace designs. Pat dry between towels, then allow lace to air dry. Often need to use several sheets together for added stability. Sheets can be ironed together on low heat (between sheets of paper) if no steam is used.
Water Soluble topping such as Dissolve or Solvy	A gel-type of topping which dissolves on contact with water. It is clear or milky-white, stretches easily, and tears easily.	Towels, polar fleece, fake fur, and other fabrics with pile.	Use as a topping to hold down loops. Adhere with adhesive spray or basting stitches. Will wash away, and loops can work their way back up through the embroidery design if it does not have a good underlayer of stitches.