

Guide to *Contour Script* & *Multi-wave Script*

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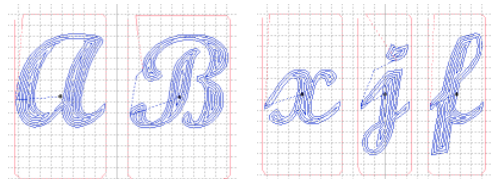
Introduction

I love variegated embroidery threads. Outline letters do not show off their beauty. Solid fills often leave very odd stripes as the result of embroidery machines starting to fill from one end of a letter and then continuing from the opposite end. The contour fill pattern solves both of these problems since the fill makes concentric trips around the letters. The multi-wave fill added in a recent update to my embroidery software also works well with variegated thread. The parallel wavy lines bring a lot of movement to the design. The fill pattern leaves some gaps along the edge as the waves travel back and forth across the letter so I added a triple stitch outline. The photograph at the end of this guide shows both alphabets. It took about 13 minutes to stitch both words, so you can see they are very quick to stitch.

The letters, numbers and punctuation marks in these embroidery alphabets have “boxes” around them, set to a given height. The boxes ensure that all the characters within the set will be sized proportionally. They also make it easy to align the letters you need for an embroidery design. The alphabets come in two sizes, 75 mm and 60 mm. The sizes refer to the heights of the boxes. The letters inside are somewhat shorter, about 42 mm and 34 mm high for most capital letters, respectively.

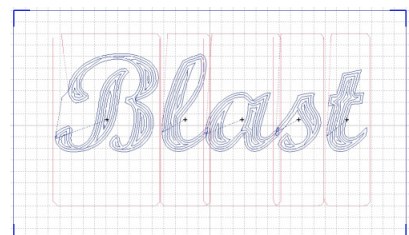
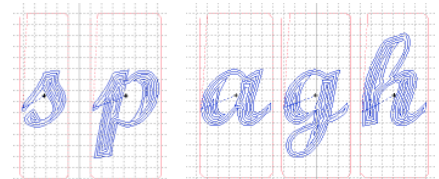
Design file names indicate the character, the design set, and the size. The characters include letters in the form *a_lower* or *Z_upper*, numbers in the form *dig_2*, and punctuation marks by name, sometimes abbreviated (e.g. *excla* for exclamation point and *sngl_open* for a single open quotation mark). The character is followed by *script* for *Contour Script* or *mws* for *Multi-wave Script*. Finally, *60* and *75* indicate the design size.

This guide will focus on lettering. Since numbers and punctuation marks do not overlap, you can align them by butting a number or punctuation mark up against its neighbor and then using your arrow keys to move it a consistent number of “clicks” away. You can also use your software’s grid marks as a guide.

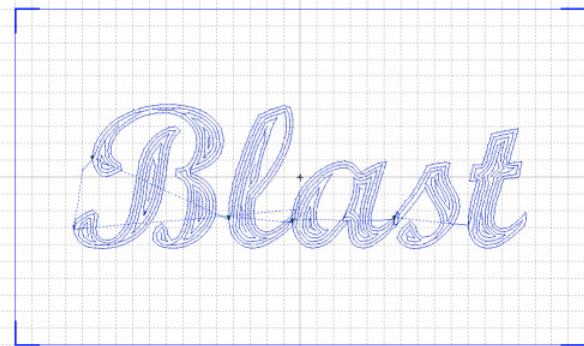
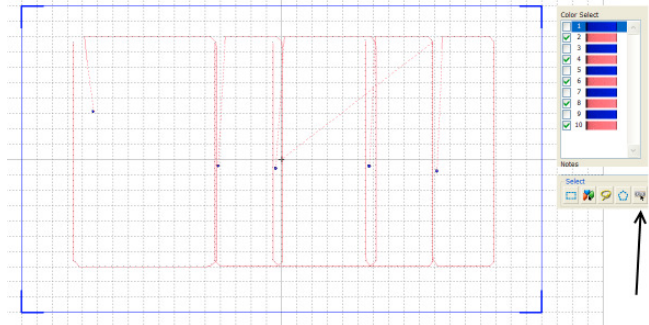


Instructions

1. Take note of where the letters you’ll use will connect to other letters. Upper case letters do not connect to letters to the left of them since they are meant to be at the start of a word. Some, like the *A* pictured here, will connect to a following letter. Others, like the *B*, will not. Lower case letters may have connectors on both sides, such as the *x*, *j* and *f*, on the left only, such as *s* and *p*, or on the right only, such as *a*, *g* and *h*. You will have a gap when a letter with no connector to the right is to the left of a letter with no connector to the left.
2. Open your embroidery customizing program.
3. Add the letters you need in left to right order. In this example: *B*, *l*, *a*, *s* and then *t*.



4. Arrange the letters along one line of the grid on your screen. If a grid is not available, make sure the bottoms of the rectangles are even. If you use a letter more than once (as in *Betty* or *Sara*) be sure to position the letters in the order in which you added them to the screen. Make sure all the letters will fit in the hoop you have selected.
5. Zoom in so that you can see the grid lines, the boxes and the lower part of the letters clearly. Turn off the 3D view feature for easier viewing.
6. Move each letter so that the bottom of the box is resting exactly on a grid line. Move the letter left and/or right to achieve the spacing you want from a non-connecting letter (*B* to *l*) and to overlap connecting letters (*l* to *a*) slightly. Ignore the sides of the boxes and look just at the letters themselves. Overlap to the second line of stitching for *Contour Script*, or until you are satisfied with the look. Overlap the *a* and *s* so that the upper edge appears continuous. The *t* does not connect so you may place it as desired.
7. When you are satisfied with your arrangement, combine stitches as directed for your software. Do not worry that the design is not centered in the hoop.
8. Cut or Copy the design and Paste it into a stitch editing program. If you have an Edit tab, use that, instead.
9. The color list shown here is as provided in the Viking/Pfaff software; yours may differ. Click on all the blue threads in the list to deselect them. You will see only the boxes.
10. Drag a box to select everything that is visible on the screen, or click a tool that will do that for you.
11. Click the Delete tool. The screen may appear empty. Click the Draw All Stitches tool and your text will appear on the screen once again.
12. Sort colors to reduce the design to a single color. (The design will stitch from left to right if you were careful in adding letters in the proper order.)
13. Center the design in the hoop.
14. Choose a color and save in the format needed by your embroidery machine.
15. If you are arranging more than one word on a line, it may be easier to combine designs for each word, but then strip away the boxes after you have arranged all words on your line. For spacing between words, add a lower case *a* at the end of one word, but position the next word to follow (maintaining vertical alignment) and then delete the *a*.



I embroidered Blast in the 75 mm size of both alphabets. The Contour Script version has 2,806 stitches. I used Superior Rainbows #821. The Multi-wave Script design has 3,222 stitches. The wave pattern reminds me of the stripes on our flag so I used Superior Rainbows #823, a mix of red, white and blue.