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Monogram Etiquette

A Monogram is a Signature or Brand

In today's marketplace, monograms are becoming increasingly more popular. They can be a very simple monogram on a shirt sleeve cuff or an extremely elegant monogram embroidered on a family heirloom. A monogram is a person's signature or brand and it can consist of a single letter, 2 letters or 3 letters and even a combination of letters and a border.

Sometimes you are asked to create a 4-letter monogram. Most monograms are created in a single color, but a monogram can be created using a single color or several colors, depending on the style of the item to be monogrammed and the monogram design. I have found that a 2-letter monogram usually looks best is a two tone of the same color, but the choice is yours and of course your customers.

Most Popular Layout of Letters for Monograms

Down through the years there have been many opinions on how a monogram should be laid out but through my research I have found that the following configurations are proper etiquette and the standard layout. For a formal monogram the Last name is used as a large initial in the center flanked with smaller initials on each side. These smaller initials or letters are approximately 50% of the height of the large center letter. The height of the smaller initials can vary depending on the taste of the customer, the style of the monogram and the item that is going to be embroidered.

These initials can be either block or script letters. The small letters on each side can be centered with the large middle letter or they can be aligned with the bottom or top of the large letter. They can even be placed on an angle or both of the small letters can be aligned and stacked on the left or right side of the large letter. They are usually placed on the left side.

Single Woman-Jessica Hope Waffle J W H

First or Christian Name/ Surname or Last Name/ Middle Name

J W H

Married Women-Jessica Waffle Sanders J S W

First or Christian Name / Married Surname or Last Name/ Maiden Name

J S W

Married Couple- Tom & Jessica Sanders- Mr. and Mrs. Tom Sanders J S T

Her First or Christian Name / Married Surname or Last Name/ His First or Christian Name

J S T

Single Initial -Married or unmarried- Can be First name or the Surname or Last Name

Jessica Hope Sanders

J or S

Most people prefer to use their first name if they are only using a single initial.

All three initials the same size

If the customer wants all of the three initials the same size you would lay them out in the same order as their name.

First or Christian Name / Middle Name/Surname or Last Name **J H S**

J H S

Four Letter Monograms

Four letter monograms are tough to lay out and really do not look as elegant, but it all depends on the style of the monogram and the actual letters. If a couple is getting married and chooses to use a hyphen in their name, this can create the need for a 4 letter monogram but do not use the hyphen in the monogram.

Dan Jenson and Sylvia White - Dan and Sylvia White-Jenson

Her First Name /Her Maiden Name/ His Surname or Last Name/ His First Name

S W J D

You can also create a 2-letter monogram using only their last names. **WJ**
If they are not happy with this, suggest that you create a monogram for her and a monogram for him using their names alone.

If it is a name such as **McDonald** and they want to use both the **M** and the **D** you can use the **M** for the large middle initial and then create a small **D** to sit on the same level as the **M** perhaps overlapping the **M**. **JM_DS**

If it is something like **De Angeles**, you can create a large **D** and a small **A** in the center of the **D**. If the name is **de Angeles** then you can create a small **d** in front of the **A** sitting at the same level. The style here is going to depend on what the actual letters are going to be and of course your customers taste. These are only suggestions, not actual rules.