



Workwear Stitch V Print?

There are numerous reasons why you might want to customise clothing or textiles with a logo, a slogan or simply your organisation's name.

You might be a business investing in branded workwear for your staff, a hotel, spa or gym wanting to add a logo to your bathrobes or towels, alternatively, you might want your sports team to bear your club's name and badging with pride.

For these and many other other reasons, getting a plain garment customised makes it your own.

One question we are continually being asked is should I have my logo/branding, printed or embroidered on my workwear.

The answer isn't simple but here is what we advise:



Workwear Durability

Both options offer good durability, but with certain professions it is more beneficial to have logos embroidered rather than printed. It is those professions where clothing has to be washed at a higher temperature and more frequently such as healthcare and laboratory work. Printing loses its edge when washed at boiling point! A professionally embroidered garment should keep its looks for many years.

Embroidery also looks more prestigious and professional when stitched on to branded business shirts and outerwear (sweatshirts, polos, fleeces) especially if it will be worn in a customer facing environment.

Generally for t-shirts, and other lighter weight workwear, printing is probably a better option as it is less obtrusive and won't impact the wearability of the garment or create puckering of the material. Care has to be taken when washing printed garments as cracking, fading and peeling may incur if washed at too high a temperature.



Size and detailing of logo/branding on your workwear

The size of the logo can also have an impact on your choice. We are often asked for a small left breast logo but with a larger slogan or logo on the back. Here it is down to cost. With lightweight garments as discussed earlier we advise simple printing front and back.

For weightier garments such as polos and sweats we suggest embroidering to the front and the larger branding printing on the rear.

If you have a very fine logo with shading it may be best to consider printing as that way more precision and accuracy can be achieved.



Workwear Budget & Costs

For embroidery it is necessary to take your logo and get it digitised (sometimes called “set up”) to create a file to instruct the embroidery machines. It is a one off cost per design (anywhere between £10 and £25 dependent on image size) and you own the end product for life. We can take your logo from a jpeg file or a scanned image.

Embroidery is very cost effective for smaller designs and smaller order quantities. To some degree embroidery is also cheaper for multi-colour branding, although “Direct-To-Garment” printing is getting cheaper all the time.



Workwear Fabrics play a role

Printed designs tend to work best on smoother fabrics, with print quality deteriorating on fabrics with courser surfaces. Embroidery however, works well with a variety of materials. A standard polo shirt may well be too loosely woven for printing to look its best, but embroidery is far more forgiving. Embroidery is a must for chunky woollen knits. Always print on hi vis workwear!!



Workwear Pricing

Price is always a factor in the decision making process and while some types of printing may well be cheaper than embroidery, it's not by much. Be warned multi coloured print jobs can work out a lot more expensive.

The type of printing used can dictate the price of the job as well as the quality. Direct to Garment Printing (DTG) or transfer printing can be done fairly cheaply even in small quantities.

Silk Screen Printing is generally the best of all the methods of printing designs, however to do it properly needs specialist equipment a fair amount of space and quite a lot of setting up (there'll almost certainly be a set up fee), for this reason, it's only really cost effective for large production runs.

Embroidery in reality is often somewhere in the middle. It might cost a little more than the cheaper types of printing, but if quality is a factor, it's far more cost effective than screen printing, especially for smaller orders.

If you're investing in custom clothing, we'd always recommend going for the best fabrics you can. They last longer and they take embroidery better.



The workwear finish

In general terms we believe that embroidery looks far nicer in most circumstances. For custom workwear, having embroidered uniforms is more prestigious and makes your brand stand out when worn by your customer facing staff. For freebie t-shirts or workwear that tends to have a short life (paint, glue, chemicals are real garment killers) then print is probably the answer.

As a result of the stitching process, embroidery sits slightly proud of the surface and often has what appears to be a textured 3D effect. Additionally, the coating on each individual thread catches the light adding an extra dimension to the design.

Conclusion

Both printing and embroidery have their own advantages. Before making a decision you will have to take into account the size of your logo design, your budget, the durability of the garment, the materials used in making up the garment and the size of your order.