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Embroidered vs Woven Patches for a Clothing Brand

Detail, Texture, MOQ and Cost Compared.



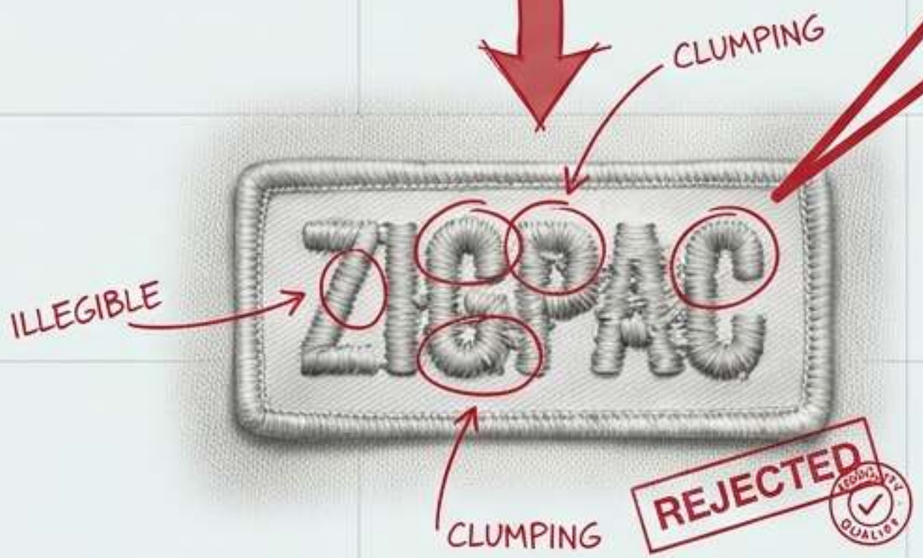
A Diagnostic Buyer’s Guide by ZIGPAC.

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The Hidden Cost of the Wrong Construction

I want a raised embroidered patch for my heavy text logo.

Failure Path



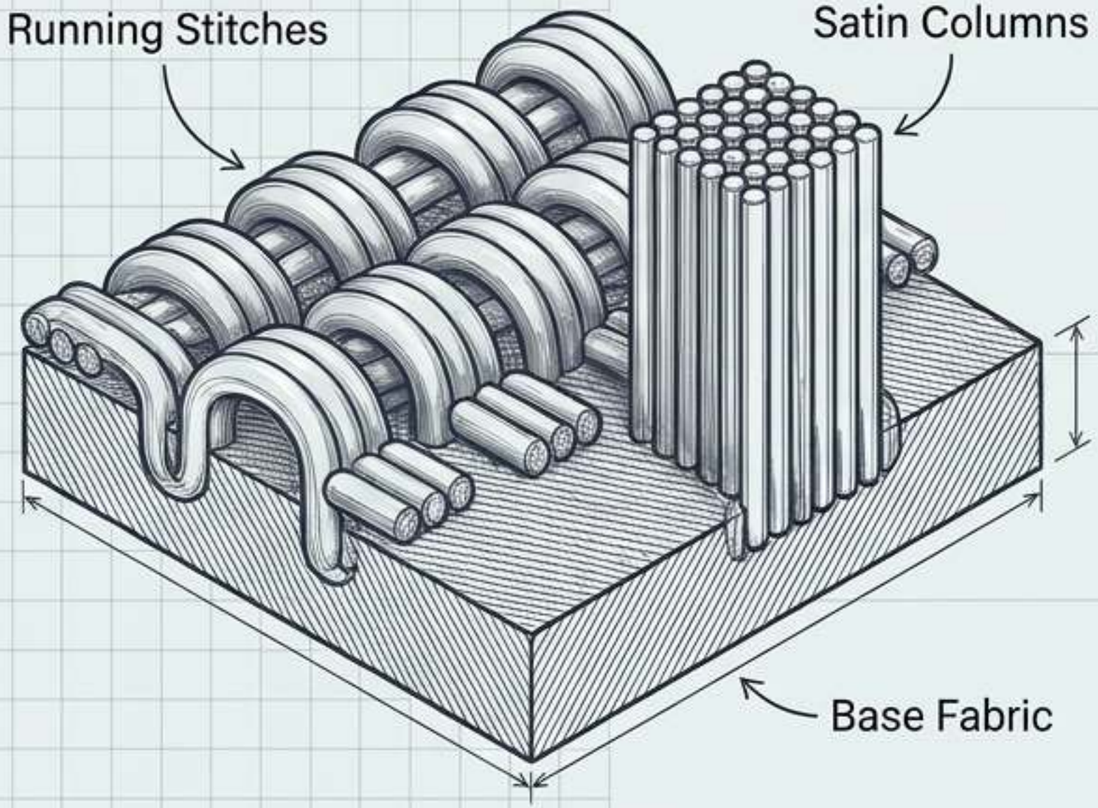
The cost of a failed patch isn't the patch itself. It's the second setup, the second proof round, and the missed drop date.

- At first-run quantities, setup and sampling are a large share of the total cost.
- A reorder in a different construction costs almost as much as the first order.

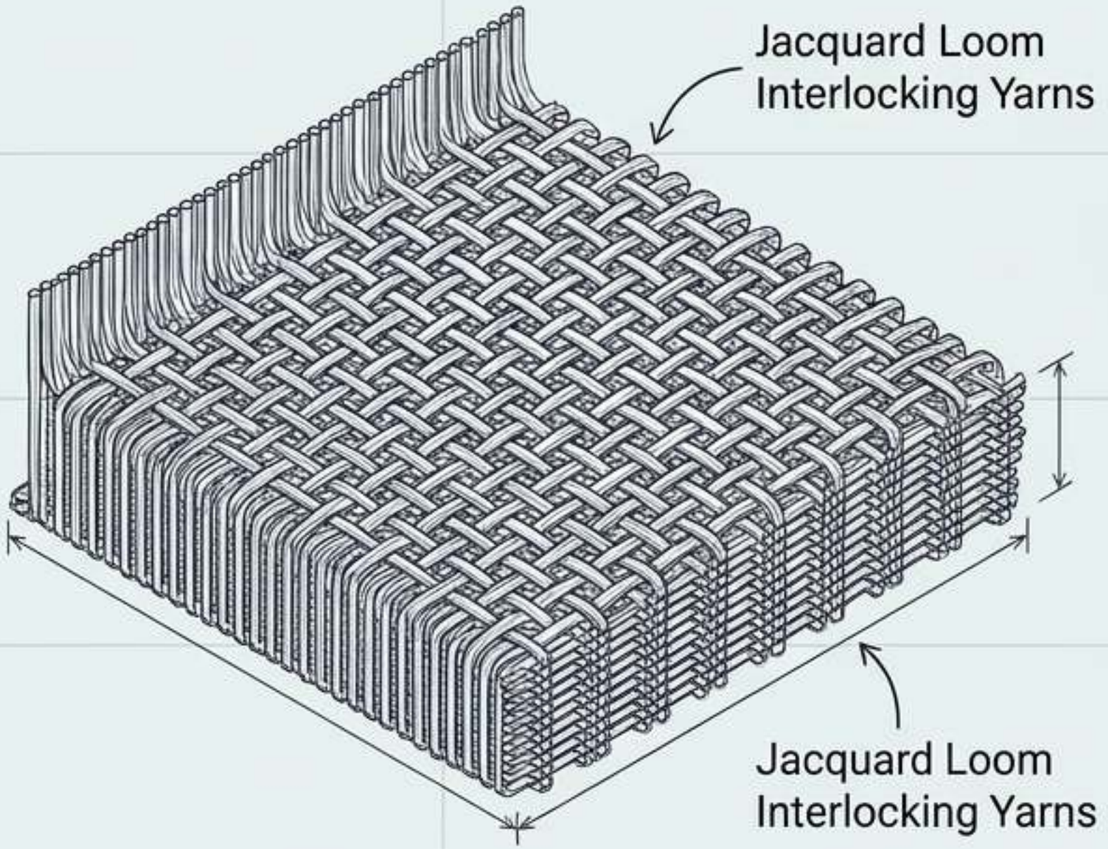
THE FIX: Decide construction before you quote using three measurable inputs: Smallest Text Height, Surface Feel, and Garment Type.

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The Core Distinction



Thread on Top.
Visible relief, slight sheen, thicker profile.



The Fabric Itself.
Flat, thin, dense, high-resolution.

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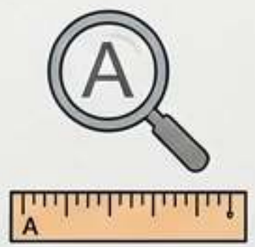
The ZIGPAC Decision Engine

Step 1 | Step 2 | Step 3 | Step 4 | Step 5

The Core Inputs

Execution

Step 1: Measure Smallest Text



- [ ] Physical limits of legibility

Step 2: Decide Surface Feel



Tactile premium

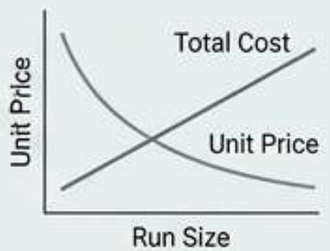
Refined smooth

Step 3: Match the Garment



- [ ] Weight and flexibility mapping

Step 4: Check Economics



- [ ] Run size and price tiers

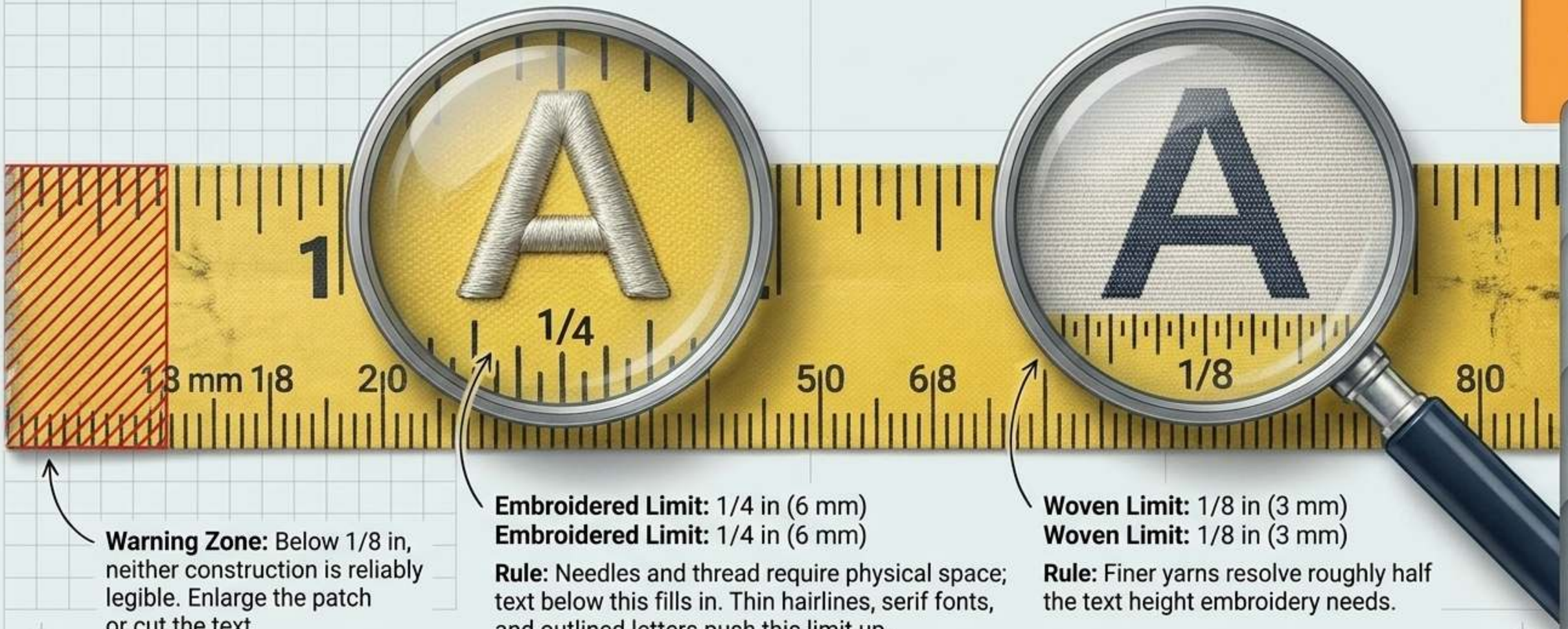
Step 5: The Proofing Phase



- [x] Validating the physical sample

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Step 1: Measure Your Smallest Text



Warning Zone: Below 1/8 in, neither construction is reliably legible. Enlarge the patch or cut the text.

Embroidered Limit: 1/4 in (6 mm)
Embroidered Limit: 1/4 in (6 mm)

Rule: Needles and thread require physical space; text below this fills in. Thin hairlines, serif fonts, and outlined letters push this limit up.

Woven Limit: 1/8 in (3 mm)
Woven Limit: 1/8 in (3 mm)

Rule: Finer yarns resolve roughly half the text height embroidery needs.

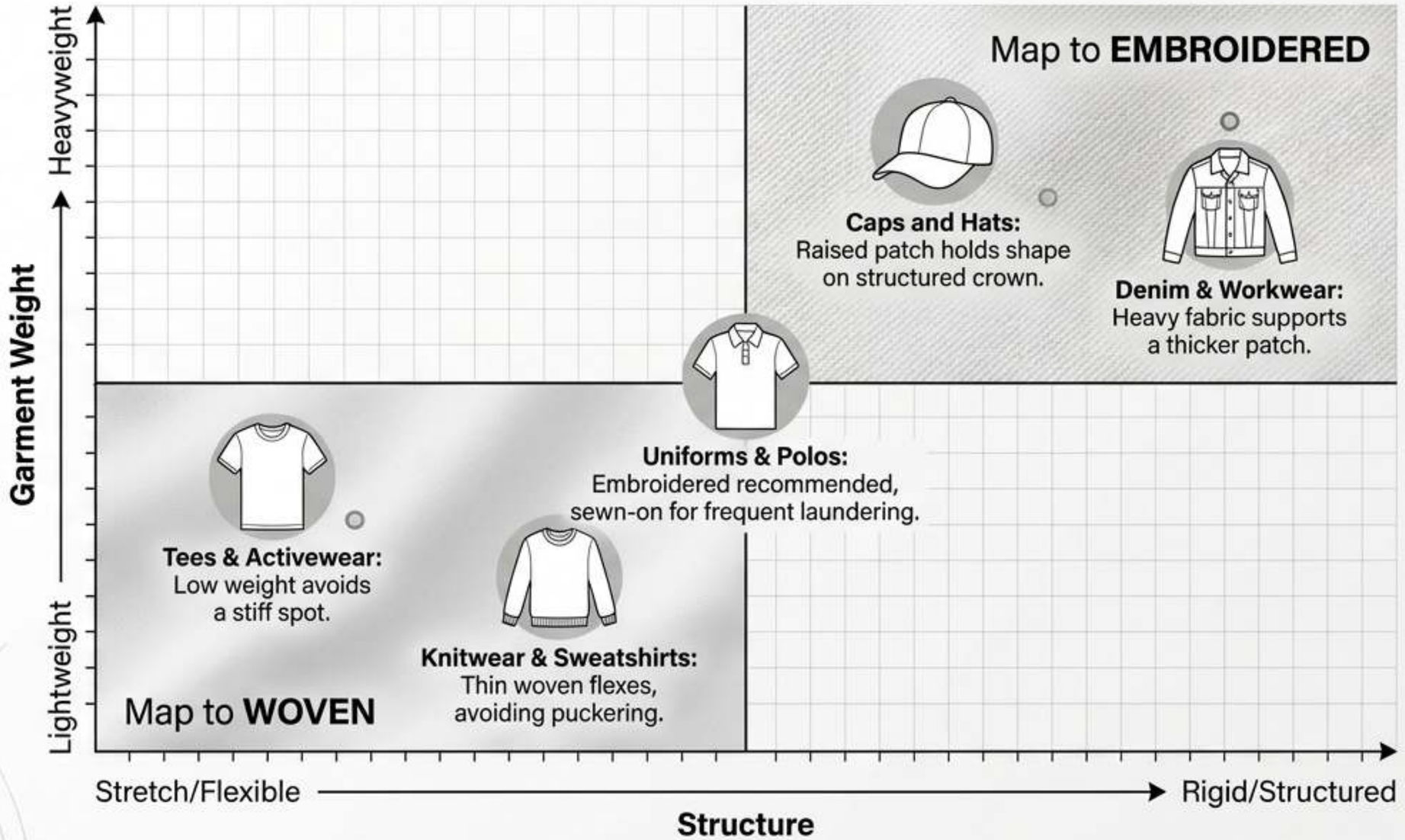
ZIGPAC®
embroidered fabric patch

Step 2: Decide What the Customer Should Feel

Embroidered	Woven
	
Premium & Tactile Raised profile, slightly stiff, light catches on the thread sheen. Reads as a traditional, bold badge.	**Refined & Flat** Lies smooth under a finger, almost disappears into the garment's surface. Matte to low sheen. Reads as modern and integrated.

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Step 3: Match Construction to the Garment



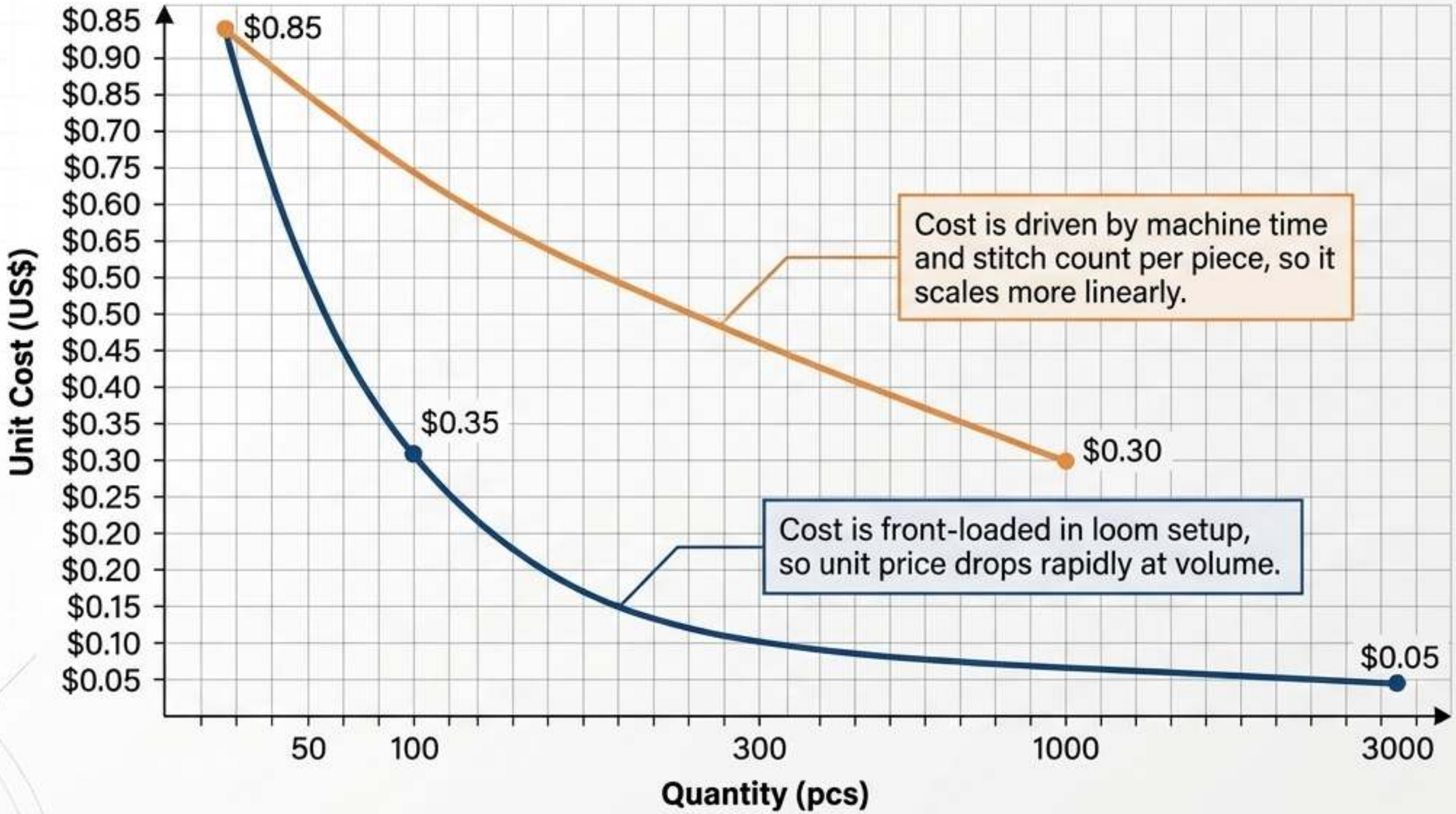
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The Master Diagnostic Matrix

	Factor	Embroidered	Woven
	Detail	Loses detail below a satin column width.	Resolves thin lines and small shapes.
	Thickness	Thicker, growing stiffer as stitch coverage rises.	Uniformly thin and flexible.
	Colors	Solid thread colors (no true gradients).	Limited yarn colors, tones blend via weave pattern (not photographic).
	Wash Behavior	Raised threads can snag or fuzz over time.	Tight flat weave resists snagging, unsealed edges can fray.

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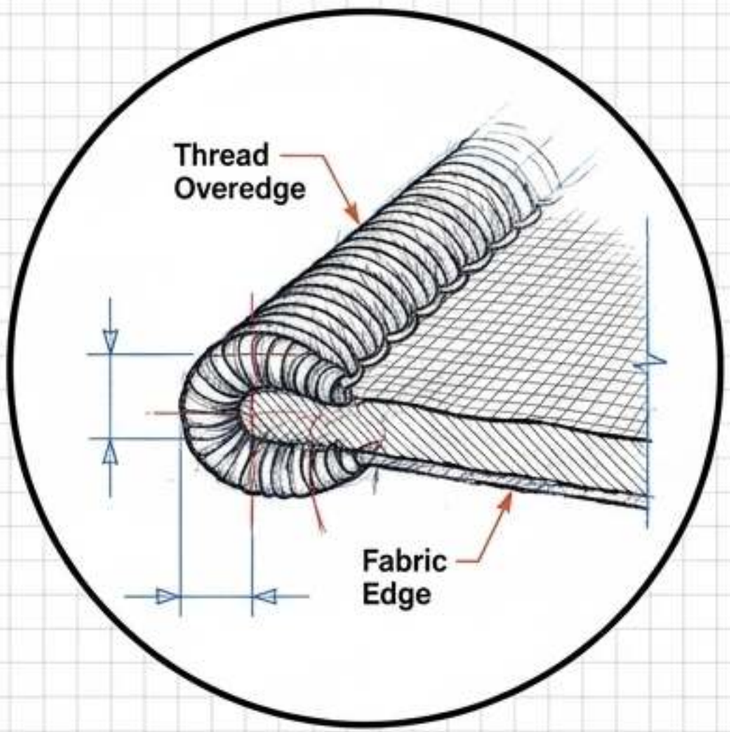
Step 4: The Economics of Production Run Sizes



ZIGPAC pricing listed Nov 2026. Custom Embroidered Patches MOQ from 50 pcs; Custom Woven Tags (damask labels) MOQ from 100 pcs. Final MOQ and price on quote.

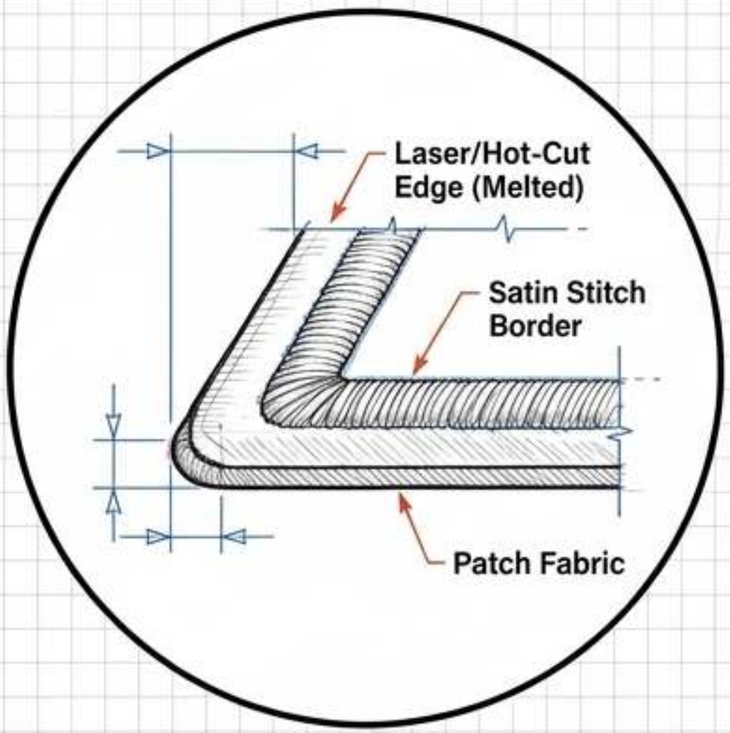
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Decoding Edges and Backings



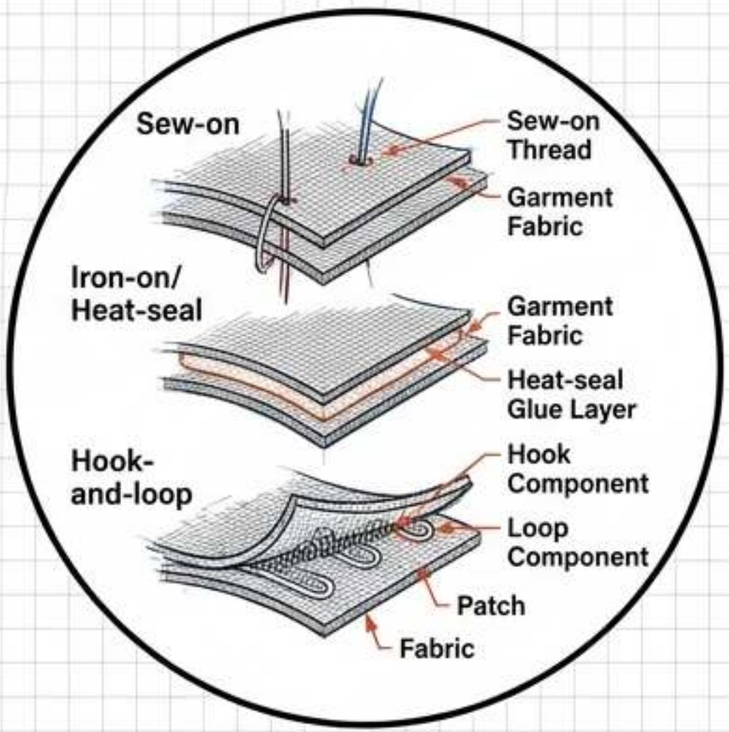
Merrow Border

Merrow is a trade name for an overedge stitch. ISO 4915 (and ASTM D6193) classifies this in the 500 class (overedge chainstitch). **Write the border type AND approximate width on your order.**



Cut Edges

Laser/hot-cut edges are common for woven tags to prevent fraying while keeping the patch completely flat.

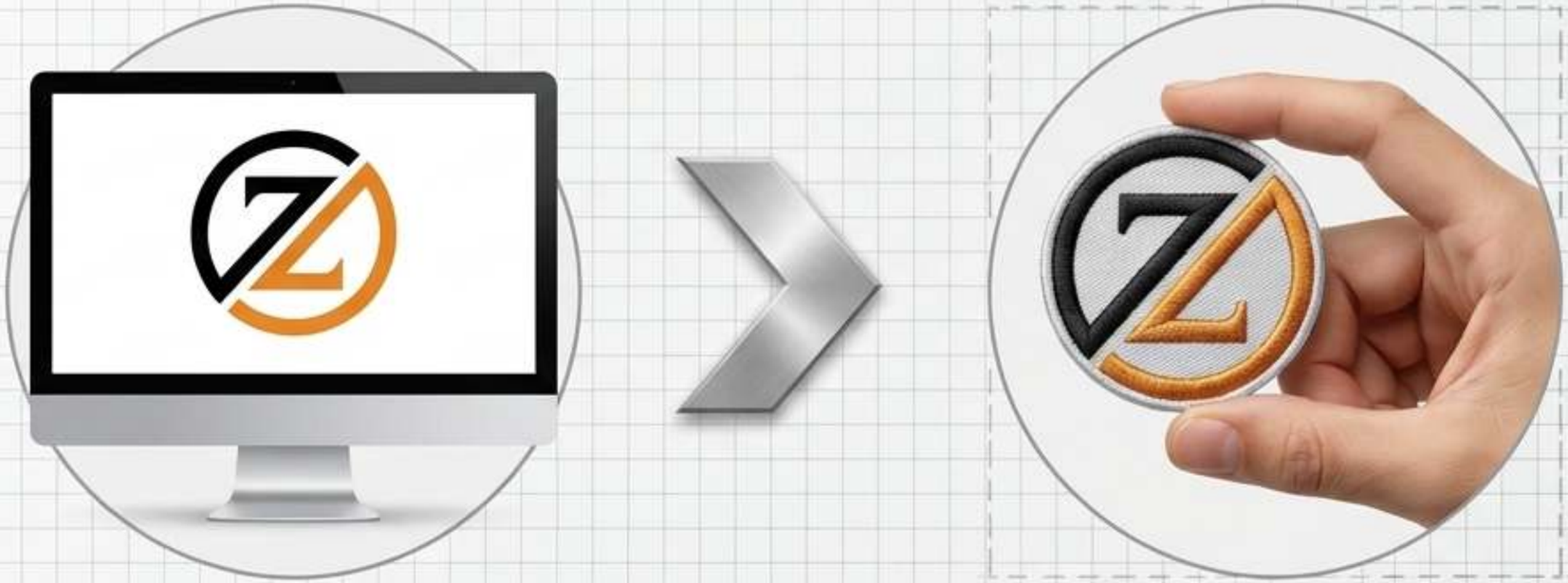


Backings

Sew-on (best for longevity), Iron-on/Heat-seal, and Hook-and-loop.

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Step 5: The Crucial Proofing Phase



Stage 1: The Free eProof

Validates layout, overall size, and color assignments

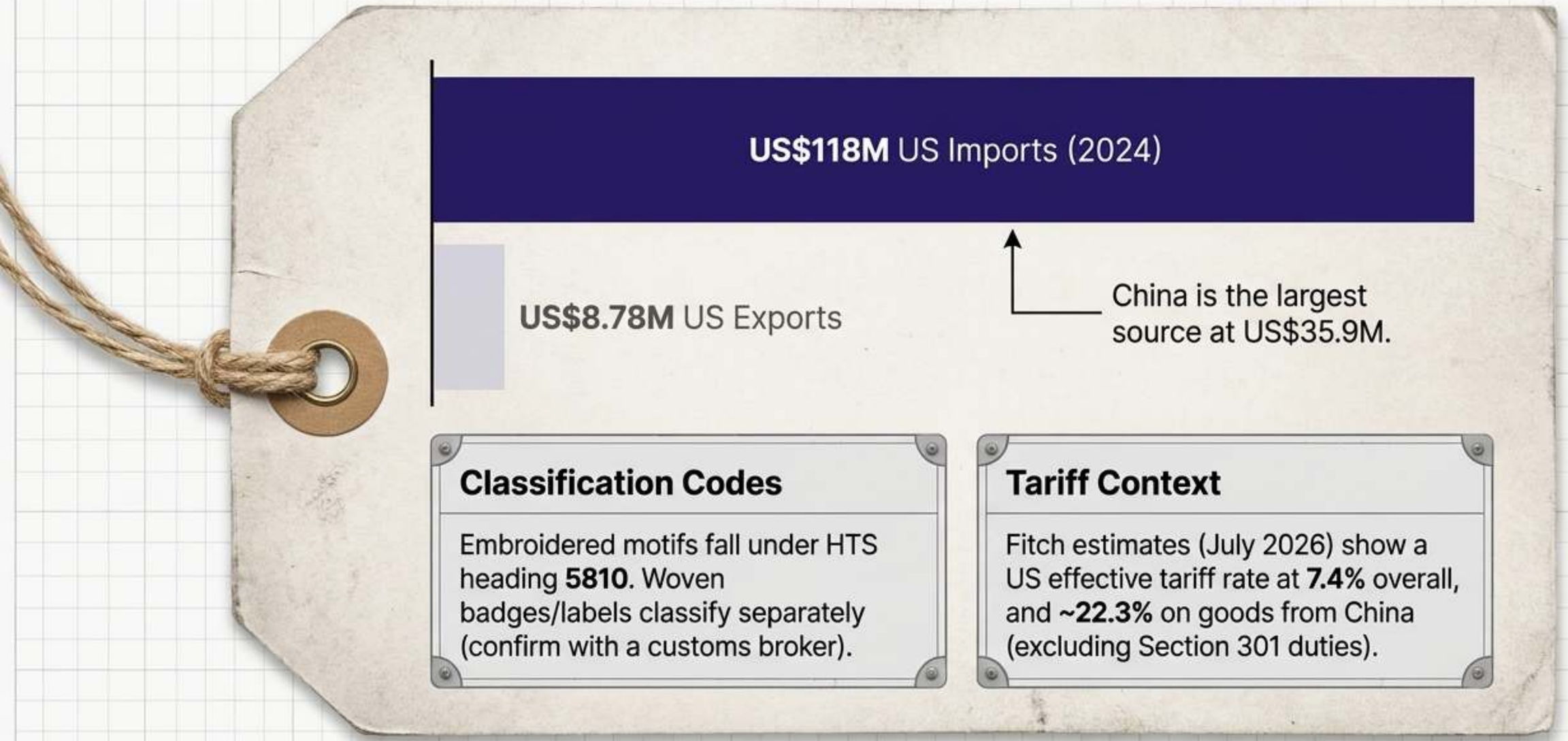
Stage 2: The Physical Sample (US$5–30)

Validates thickness, stiffness, and whether small text successfully survives the physical limits of thread/yarn.

Actionable Advice: Zigpac recommends approving a physical sample before bulk production, especially for first runs or logos pushing the 1/4 inch or 1/8 inch text limits. (Standard production: 7-10 days post-approval).

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Logistics: Budgeting for Duty and Tariffs



Classification Codes

Embroidered motifs fall under HTS heading **5810**. Woven badges/labels classify separately (confirm with a customs broker).

Tariff Context

Fitch estimates (July 2026) show a US effective tariff rate at **7.4%** overall, and **~22.3%** on goods from China (excluding Section 301 duties).

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Compliance & Safety Standards



Children's Products (CPSC)

Under 12 years old.
16 CFR 1500.87.
Requires total lead limit below 100 ppm in any accessible component.

Action: Ask for test documentation, not verbal assurance.



Flammability (16 CFR Part 1610)

Governs flammability of clothing textiles.

Note: Applies to the finished garment, not to the patch on its own.



Recycled Claims (OEKO-TEX)

OEKO-TEX STANDARD 100
Edition 01.2026.
Cannot claim "recycled" below 20% recycled content.
Excludes pre-consumer PET bottles.

Action: Request supplier certificate number before printing claims.

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The Common Pairing: The Ultimate Brand Strategy

OUTSIDE (Chest / Sleeve / Yoke)
ZIGPAC Custom Embroidered Patch.

Why: Texture, premium visibility, bold tactile feel.







INSIDE (Neck / Hem / Side Seam)
ZIGPAC Custom Woven Tag (Damask Label).

Why: Thin, soft against skin, carries microscopic fine text (brand name, size, care symbols).

Pro Tip: Thread and yarn palettes differ. Use the same Pantone references for both and compare physical samples side-by-side before approving the dual run.

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Execution Readiness: The Perfect Quote Checklist

- ☐ Vector logo file (AI, EPS, PDF, or SVG).
- ☐ Finished size (inches or mm), including the border.
- ☐ Smallest text height measured at finished size.
- ☐ Thread or Pantone colors (and total color count).
- ☐ Garment fabric type and placement location.
- ☐ Border and backing preference (e.g., ISO 4915 Class 500 Merrow, sew-on).
- ☐ Quantity per design and required in-hand date.

Ready to engineer your order? Submit your specifications via the ZIGPAC embroidered patch quote page for a **free eProof** and **finalized MOQ pricing**.