

sewdaily

sewing FOR BEGINNERS:



Sewing BASICS
and Easy Sewing Projects
for Beginners

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sewing FOR BEGINNERS:

Sewing BASICS and Easy Sewing
Projects for Beginners

- 1** All About Thread
- 2** Fabric Gift Tags
- 3** At-Your-Fingertips Pincushion
- 4** Calendar Patchwork Tote
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sewing^{*} basics

GETTING STARTED

A quick reference
guide to basic tools,
techniques and terms

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I LEARNED TO SEW FROM MY MOTHER AND GRANDMOTHER when I was young and then picked it back up when I was an adult. Even though I had spent many years at their sides learning techniques, when I began sewing again, it felt a little like I was starting all over as a beginning sewist. Of course, I immediately launched into making a jacket—not exactly a simple sewing project, but it was one way to reteach myself forgotten sewing skills! This collection of beginner projects, “*Sewing for Beginners: Sewing Basics and Easy Sewing Projects for Beginners*,” is a much better way to get yourself stitching, whether you are an absolute newbie or rekindling rusty skills.

Inside this guide, you’ll find sewing basics for beginners, starting with one of sewing’s most important notions: thread! From there, you will learn from step-by-step sewing instructions how to create adorable projects: gifts tags, pincushions, and a patchwork tote, building skills along the way. Finally, you’ll get an indispensable glossary of basic sewing terms and techniques that you can refer to anytime you run across a new term.

Here is a sampling of some of the skills and knowledge you will develop from reading this guide and working on these beginner sewing patterns:

Everything You Need to Know about Thread: Because thread is what holds it all together, the type of thread that you choose for a project is just as critical as the fabric. Sewing guru Linda Griepentrog gives you the scoop from all-purpose to variegated. She discusses the use for each type of thread and provides wonderful sewing tips for beginners.

Hand-Stitching Basics: You’ll get comfortable with topstitching and decorative stitching on the Fabric Gift Tags. Use key hand-sewing stitches like the basting stitch, running stitch, and backstitch, plus try sewing on buttons and snaps with the At-Your-Fingertips Pincushion. By the time you finish these projects, your hand-stitching skills will be sitting pretty.

Assembly How-To: By learning how to put together and construct these sewing projects for beginners, you will have the building blocks of basic assembly. You’ll become familiar and comfortable with reading instructions, building confidence for any design that you work on in the future.

Practice Patchwork: What better way to pick up basic patchworking skills than to tackle an easy sewing project like the Calendar Patch-

work Tote? After you learn to piece together the simple patchwork grid that embellishes this sturdy tote, you’ll be ready to take on bigger patchwork projects.

Restyling and Rethinking: Learn to work with what you’ve got, whether it’s a scrap of a leftover favorite fabric or a vintage textile. As you begin to think creatively about the tools and notions you have on hand, you will start to come up with your own sewing ideas for beginner projects.

Know it All: Anytime you run across sewing lingo that you aren’t familiar with, you can just flip right to the Sewing Basics glossary, where you’ll find detailed explanations of techniques along with helpful illustrations. It’s like having an expert sewing friend on hand 24/7.

I hope you’ll find this guide with easy sewing projects for beginners helpful as you embark upon your sewing adventures.

Happy Stitching,
amber eden
Editor, *Stitch* magazine

sewdaily

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Choosing the right thread for your project can be daunting, but understanding “spool speak” makes the job much easier.

Story **LINDA TURNER GRIEPENTROG**

all about *thread*

Most fabric stores offer a colorful array of thread options, from utilitarian to decorative varieties. Here are some of the common thread varieties available and when and how to use them best.

1. ALL-PURPOSE *{Coats & Clark Dual Duty XP General Thread}*
Used for general sewing tasks, all-purpose thread is available in 100% cotton, 100% polyester, and cotton/polyester blends. Where stretch is needed, choose polyester or blended threads; for stability, choose cotton. Look for fine/lingerie weights of all-purpose threads for delicate fabric sewing. Always select a shade slightly darker than your fabric, or for multicolor prints, choose a color that blends. Use a needle compatible with the fabric weight/type.

2. SILK *{YLI Silk, size 100}*
Noted for its high sheen, silk thread is available in several sizes and can be used for construction on fine and tailored garments, topstitching, buttonholes, quilting, and other decorative purposes. Use a needle compatible with the fabric/thread size.





size matters

- ▶ Threads for machine stitching come in various sizes, depending on the intended use. Look for sizes 12 to 100, with the smaller number denoting a larger thread.
- ▶ All-purpose sewing thread is generally size 50; lingerie and bobbin threads are size 60 to 100; decorative threads are size 40 through 12.
- ▶ Increase stitch length and/or width when sewing with heavier threads. Use a larger needle size because the thread size increases to avoid shredding and breakage as the strands pass through the eye and form stitches.

3. TOPSTITCHING *{Gütermann Silk Topstitching Thread}*

Planned for prominence, topstitching thread is available in cotton or silk. Use a large-eye needle and elongated stitch length for best results.

4. HEAVY-DUTY/UPHOLSTERY/OUTDOOR

{Coats & Clark Dual Duty XP Heavy Thread}

These threads are designed for the extra strength needed for home furnishings (such as slipcovers), sports gear, and other applications where durability is key. Look for nylon and polyester options. Outdoor threads offer UV protection and moisture resistance. Use a large needle compatible with the fabric weight and thread size.

5. MACHINE EMBROIDERY *{Sulky Rayon Embroidery Thread, size 40; embroidery design credit: Hope Yoder (hopeyoder.com), Romantic Hearts & Bows, design: flw2}*

Available in rayon, cotton, polyester, and other novelty blends, machine embroidery thread is also great for decorative stitching. Try various weights/fibers for different looks, in both solids and variegateds.

Use with an embroidery needle and embroidery bobbin thread.

6. VARIEGATED *{Valdani Hand-dyed Variegated, 35 wt. Thread}*

Fun for novelty stitching and quilting, these transitional threads can stitch out as stripes, in subtle color blends, or in twisted combinations, depending on the brand. They're available in cotton, polyester, rayon, and metallic, in varying sizes.

7



8



9



10



7. DENIM/JEANS {Coats & Clark Dual Duty Plus

Extra Strong Thread for Jeans}

Available in blended denim blues or the traditional gold used in readymade jeans, this heavy-weight thread is great for topstitching. Use with a denim/jeans or a topstitching needle with a sharp point and an elongated eye.

8. METALLIC {Signature SN Metallic Thread (zigzag); Gütermann

Metallic Effect Thread (satin stitch); Glissen Gloss Prizm Holographic Thread (spikes)}

Purely decorative, metallic threads are available in core-covered, twisted, flat, and holographic varieties. Use a metallic needle, loosen tension, and slow the machine speed for best results.

9. WOOL/ACRYLIC {Madeira Lana Thread}

Slightly fuzzy in nature, this blended thread is ideal for blanket stitching and other decorative uses on wool and other fabrics; it's also suitable for machine embroidery. Use with a large needle (size 90/14 or 100/16) and remember to clean the machine frequently because this thread produces lint.

10. ELASTIC {Stretchrite Elastic Thread}

Used only in the bobbin, this stretchy thread creates instant shirring when paired with all-purpose or decorative top threads and used on a lightweight fabric.

LINDA TURNER GRIEPENTROG is the owner of G Wiz Creative services and works from her home office outside Portland, Oregon. She loves sewing, quilting and all things fabric. In addition to writing, she also leads fabric shopping tours to Hong Kong for the American Sewing Guild.



fabric gift tags

by TRICIA WADDELL

Make friends and family feel extra special with personalized gift tags. Stamp or embroider the recipient's name on the tag for the perfect final touch to your present.

FABRIC

Square Tag:

- 2½" × 2½" (6.5 × 6.5 cm) square of print fabric
- 2¼" × ⅝" (5.5 × 1.5 cm) piece of solid fabric (or length needed for word/name plus ½" [1.3 cm])
- Two 2½" × 2½" (6.5 × 6.5 cm) squares of cotton duck cloth

Rectangle Tag:

- Two 3⅜" × 2" (8.6 × 5 cm) pieces of cotton duck cloth (or length needed for word/name)
- 3¼" × 2½" (8.5 × 6.5 cm) piece of print fabric

OTHER SUPPLIES

- Contrasting sewing thread(s)
- Small alphabet stamps (for word/name on Square Tag)
- Acid-free, archival pigment ink pad (for word/name on Square Tag)
- Embroidery floss and embroidery needle (for word/name on Rectangle Tag)
- Awl
- ⅜" (5 mm) round eyelet (one for each tag)
- Eyelet-setting tool
- Acrylic ruler

FINISHED SIZES

- Square Tag:* 2½" × 2½" (6.5 × 6.5 cm);
- Rectangle Tag:* 3⅜" × 2" (8.6 × 5 cm)



SQUARE TAG

- 1** Topstitch randomly up and down 1" (2.5 cm) in from the left side of the printed fabric. Set aside.
- 2** Rubber stamp the name of the gift recipient on the solid fabric and cut out to desired length, leaving a little more than ½" (1.3 cm) of blank fabric to the left of the stamped letters to wrap around the left side of the tag.
- 3** Place the stamped solid fabric on the print fabric in the desired location, matching up the left edges. Machine stitch the stamped solid fabric to the print fabric square as close to the edge as possible.

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4 Place the square of print fabric on top of one square of cotton duck cloth, with the print fabric wrapped around the left side of the cotton duck square by 1/2" (2.5 cm).

5 Place the second square of cotton duck on the back of the tag, sandwiching the print fabric and stamped fabric 1/2" (2.5 cm) overlap in between the duck cloth squares.

6 Topstitch through all layers, 1/8" (3 mm) from the edge around the perimeter of the tag and along the right edge of the print fabric on the tag.

7 Use an awl to make a hole where you want to place the eyelet (be sure to make the hole far enough down to accommodate the eyelet without overlapping the edge). Use the eyelet-setting tool to attach the eyelet a minimum of 1/8" (3 mm) from the edge of the tag.



RECTANGLE TAG

1 Lightly stamp the name of the gift recipient, starting 1 1/2" (3.8 cm) from the left side of one piece of cotton duck cloth.

2 Using the embroidery needle and 3 strands of embroidery floss, chain-stitch on top of the stamped letters.

3 Using 2 contrasting colors of sewing thread, machine stitch wavy lines along the length of the embroidered piece of cotton duck cloth, being careful not to stitch over the embroidery.

4 Place the second piece of cotton duck cloth behind the first and line up the edges; set aside.

5 Fold under and iron a 1/8" (3 mm) fabric border on all sides of the print fabric piece. Miter and snip the corners so they create neatly folded corners.

6 Fold the print fabric in half along the width and wrap it around the left side of both duck cloth pieces, sandwiching them in the middle. Pin all three layers in place. Topstitch through all layers, 1/8" (3 mm) from the edge, along the outside border of the print fabric, then topstitch around the three exposed edges of duck cloth, ending the stitching at the edges of the print fabric.

7 Use an awl to make a hole where you want to place the eyelet (be sure to make the hole far enough down to accommodate the eyelet without overlapping the edge). Use the eyelet-setting tool to attach the eyelet a minimum of 1/8" (3 mm) from the edge of the tag.

TRICIA WADDELL is the former editor of *Stitch*. When she's not working, she spends her time making all kinds of stuff.



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at-your-fingertips pincushion

by MELINDA BARTA

Ever start sewing away and can't find a place to put those pesky pins because your pincushion is nowhere in sight? Keep those pins close at hand by wearing your pincushion on your wrist.

FABRIC (for 1 pincushion)

- 7" x 3½" (18 x 9 cm) piece of patterned cotton fabric
- 10" x 1" (25.5 x 2.5 cm) piece of patterned cotton fabric (matching or contrasting) for ribbon backing
- 10" x 1" (25.5 x 2.5 cm) piece of medium-weight fusible web

OTHER SUPPLIES

- Sewing thread in color to match fabric
- Strong cotton thread for basting
- Fiberfill (about a handful)
- Cotton embroidery thread in color to contrast fabric

- 3 two-hole 10–16mm (¾" – ⅝") buttons
- 10" (25.5 cm) of ⅝" (1.5 cm) wide synthetic velvet ribbon
- Sewing thread in color to match ribbon
- 1 set of 12mm snaps
- Sizes 3 and 10 embroidery needles
- Terry-cloth towel
- Lighter

FINISHED SIZE

2" (5 cm) wide x 1" (2.5 cm) tall

MAKE PINCUSHION

1 Fold the 7" x 3½" (18 x 9 cm) piece of fabric in half widthwise, right sides together, so the short ends meet. Using the sewing thread that matches the fabric, sew along the raw edges opposite the fold using a ½" (1.3 cm) seam allowance to form a tube.

2 Leaving a 5" (12.5 cm) tail, use the size 10 embroidery needle and 12" (30.5 cm) of strong cotton sewing thread to baste around the top of the tube, 1" (2.5 cm) from the top edge. Remove the needle, pull the ends of the thread to gather the fabric, and tie several tight square knots with the tail and working threads.

3 Turn the tube right side out and fill with fiberfill. Repeat basting instructions as in step 2, but just before gathering the fabric and tying the knots, use your forefinger to push the raw edge down inside the tube.

4 Pass the size 3 embroidery needle and 24" (61 cm) of embroidery thread up through one hole of 1 button and down through the other hole; tie the tail and working threads together. Center the button over the gathered circle of fabric on the bottom of the pincushion. Stitch straight up through the pincushion, pass up through one hole of the second button (centered on top of the pincushion), down through the other hole, and through the pincushion, exiting through one hole of the first button. Continue stitching the buttons together, passing through the center of the pincushion and pulling tight to cause the pincushion to pucker.



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EMBELLISH

5 If desired, embellish the pincushion with running or backstitches. Tie a knot on one end of a 24" (61 cm) length of embroidery thread and thread the size 10 needle on the other side. Pass the needle through the bottom of the pincushion so that the knot is hidden under the button. Stitch as desired. The white/gray/red pincushion was embellished with lines of running stitch; the white/green/black pincushion was embellished with loopy lines of backstitch. When tying off, be sure to hide the knots under a button.

MAKE STRAP

6 Use the iron to adhere the fusible web to the center back of the 10" x 1" (25.5 x 2.5 cm) piece of fabric, according to manufacturer's directions. Before removing the backing paper, cut the fabric in half lengthwise so it measures 10" x 1/2" (25.5 x 1.3 cm). Remove the web's backing paper. Lay the ribbon facedown on the terry-cloth towel on the ironing board, then lay the fabric down on top of the ribbon with the fusible web sandwiched in between. Use the iron to fuse the fabric to the back of the ribbon.

7 Use the sewing thread that matches the ribbon and the size 10 needle to stitch the snaps to the ends of the strap, placing them so that the ribbon will fit snugly around your wrist (make sure that one side of the snap is stitched to the top side of the ribbon, and the other side of the snap is stitched to the underside). Stitch the remaining button to the top side of the ribbon, concealing the stitches created when attaching

the snap (stitched to the underside). Trim the ribbon ends at an angle and lightly melt with the lighter to prevent fraying.

8 Center the strap over the button on the back of the pincushion and slip-stitch it in place, stitching lines across the ribbon on both sides of the button. Make several passes to secure the strap.

MELINDA BARTA is editor of *Beadwork* magazine. She is the author of the best-selling books *Custom Cool Jewelry* (Interweave, 2008) and *Hip to Stitch* (Interweave, 2005), coauthor of *Mixed Metals* (Interweave, 2009), and has filmed many instructional DVDs. Look for her newest book in late 2012.

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calendar patchwork tote

by **SUSAN WASINGER**

Transform vintage kitchen calendar towels into an eco-friendly tote to take you to the market in style. Create the patchwork by cutting out interesting graphic words and images from the towels for a one-of-a-kind design.

FABRIC

— $\frac{3}{4}$ yd (68.5 cm) of cotton canvas or duck
2 or 3 (or more) cotton or linen vintage kitchen calendar towels

OTHER SUPPLIES


- Matching thread
- Handsewing needle
- Tailor's chalk or marking pen
- Acrylic quilt ruler

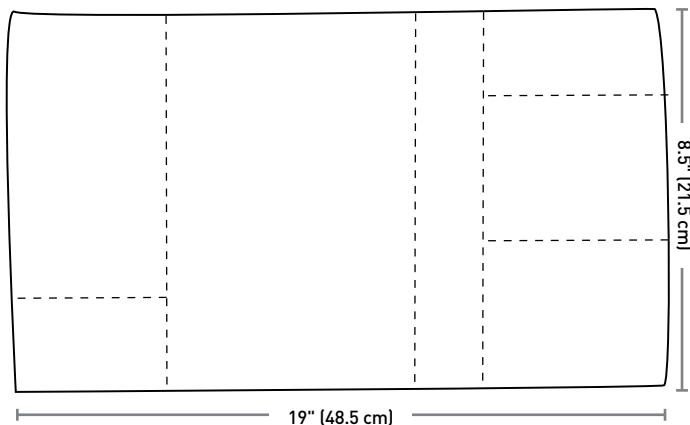
FINISHED SIZE

—17½" (44.5) at the widest top opening tapering to 11" (28 cm) wide at the bottom × 16½" (42 cm) tall.

CUT OUT FABRIC

- 1** Cut 2 pieces of 19" × 4½" (48 × 11.5 cm) cotton canvas or duck for the top band.
- 2** For the 2 central patchwork bands (1 for each side of the bag), 1 pieced fabrics together so the finished patchwork bands measured 19 × 8½" (48 × 20.5 cm) each. See Steps 5 and 6 for instructions.
- 3** For the bottom of the tote bag, cut a 19" × 19" (48 × 48 cm) square of cotton canvas or duck.
- 4** Cut 4 pieces of fabric, each 2" × 23" (5 × 58.5 cm) for the 2 straps.

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calendar patchwork tote
figure 1

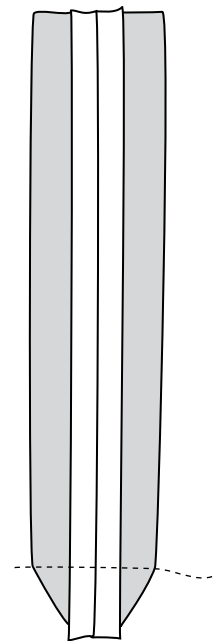


figure 2

CREATE PATCHWORK PIECES

5 To create the 2 patchwork inserts, cut interesting graphics, both words and images, from the vintage kitchen linens. The pieces can be different sizes and shapes if you so desire.

6 Machine stitch the individual pieces together with $\frac{1}{4}$ " (6 mm) seams, then use a zigzag stitch to finish the seam allowances. The finished pieces should each be cut to 19" x 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ " (48 x 20.5 cm). See **figure 1** for the basic shapes I chose to use for my patchwork band.

ASSEMBLY

Note: Use $\frac{3}{8}$ " (1 cm) seam allowances for this section unless otherwise indicated.

7 With right sides together, machine stitch one of the top bands onto the top edge of one of the patchwork inserts.

8 With right sides together, machine stitch the bottom edge of this same patchwork insert to the bottom body piece of the bag.

9 At the other end of this main piece, attach the other patchwork insert as in Step 8.

10 At the other end of the patchwork insert just used, attach the other top band, as in Step 7.

11 Fold this large fabric piece in half, right sides together, making sure the bands of patchwork match up along the sides. Machine stitch the side seams and finish them by zigzagging the seam allowances together.

12 Turn the bag right side out and fold down the top edge of the bag, toward the wrong side $\frac{1}{2}$ " (1.3 cm), then fold over again 1" (2.5 cm). Pin and

topstitch around the perimeter of the bag, about $\frac{3}{4}$ "– $\frac{7}{8}$ " (2–2.2 cm) in from the edge.

13 To give the bag structure, create a bottom gusset as follows: Turn the bag inside out and lay it flat in front of you so the bottom corner is pointing up and the side seam is running directly down the center. Measure in from the corner about $3\frac{1}{4}$ " (8.5 cm) and mark a line across the width (from edge to edge). This line will be about 6" (15 cm) long. Machine stitch through both layers along the line (**figure 2**). Repeat on the other side at the opposite bottom corner of the bag. It makes a stronger bottom if you leave the excess fabric in place instead of trimming the seam. When you turn the bag right side out, you will have a flat bottom created by the seams.

MAKING AND ATTACHING STRAPS

14 Pin 2 of the strap pieces together with right sides facing. Machine stitch $\frac{1}{4}$ " (6 mm) seams along the long sides and one of the short ends. Trim the corners and turn right side out. Tuck in the raw edges on the open end and hand- or machine-stitch closed. Repeat entire step with the remaining strap pieces.

15 Mark the positions for the four places the straps will attach to the bag along the top edge (2 on each side). Each should be about $5\frac{1}{2}$ " (14 cm) in from the side seams.

16 Tuck the strap end about $1\frac{1}{2}$ " (4 cm) into the bag's interior and pin in place. Topstitch horizontally across the top and bottom of the $1\frac{1}{2}$ " (4 cm) of handle that is inside the bag, with the bottom stitching laying right over the topstitching already in place. Backstitch repeatedly to

reinforce the connection. Repeat entire step to attach the other end of the same strap to the other mark on the same side of the bag. Repeat entire step again to attach the remaining strap to the opposite side of the bag.

SUSAN WASINGER has been sewing since she was four years old. Her work in media, from graphic design to architecture to eco-crafts, has appeared in *Natural Home* and *Metropolitan Home Magazine*. She has also been featured on HGTV's *Look What I Did*. Her book, *Fabricate: 17 Innovative Sewing Projects that Make Fabric the Star* (Interweave 2009) is available at shop.sewdaily.com.

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* sewing basics

GETTING STARTED

A quick reference guide to basic tools, techniques and terms

SEWING KIT

The following items are essential for your sewing kit. Make sure you have these tools at hand before starting any of the projects:

- **ACRYLIC RULER** This is a clear flat ruler, with a measuring grid at least 2" (5 cm) wide × 18" (45.5 cm) long. A rigid acrylic (quilter's) ruler should be used when working with a rotary cutter.
- **CLOTH MEASURING TAPE** Make sure it's at least 60" (152.5 cm) long.
- **CRAFT SCISSORS** Use these for cutting out paper patterns.
- **DRESSMAKER'S SHEARS** These sharp long-bladed scissors are used to cut fabric.
- **EMBROIDERY SCISSORS** These small scissors are used to trim off threads, clip corners, and do other intricate cutting work.
- **FABRIC MARKING PENS/PENCILS + TAILOR'S CHALK** Available in several colors for use on light and dark fabrics; use them for tracing patterns and pattern markings onto your fabric. Tailor's chalk is available in triangular pieces, rollers, and pencils. Some forms (such as powdered) can simply be brushed away; refer to manufacturer's instructions for the recommended removal method for your chosen marking tool.
- **HANDSEWING + EMBROIDERY NEEDLES** Keep an assortment of sewing and embroidery needles in different sizes, from fine to sturdy.
- **IRON, IRONING BOARD + PRESS CLOTHS** An iron is an essential tool when sewing. Use cotton muslin or silk organza as a press cloth to protect delicate fabric surfaces from direct heat.
- **PATTERN PAPER** Have some pattern paper or other large paper (such as newsprint, butcher paper, or pattern tracing cloth) on hand for tracing the patterns you intend to use from the pattern insert. Regular office paper may be used for templates that will fit.

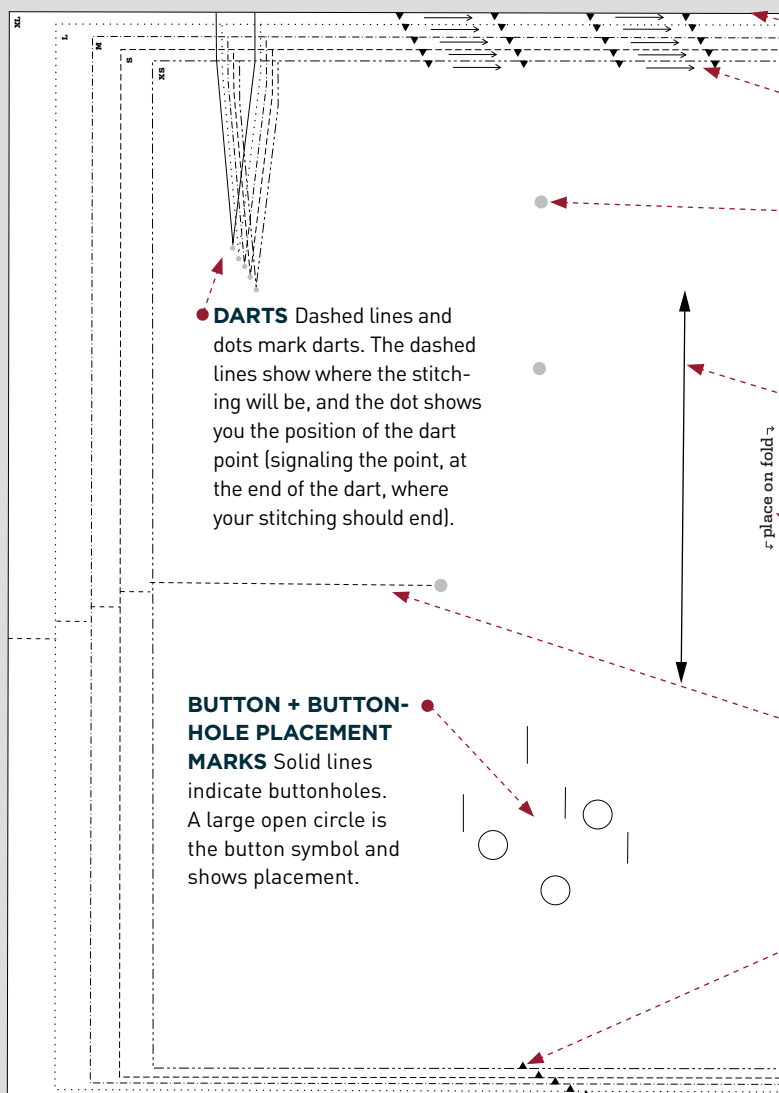
- **SEAM GAUGE** This small ruler with a movable slider is used for marking hems, checking seam allowances, placing buttons, and more.
- **SEAM RIPPER** Handy for quickly ripping out stitches.
- **SPIKED TRACING WHEEL + COLORED TRACING PAPER** Use these tools for tracing patterns and markings onto your fabric.
- **STRAIGHT PINS + PINCUSHION** Always keep lots of pins nearby.
- **WEIGHTS** Pattern weights or small rocks are great for keeping fabric in place while drawing, pinning, and cutting.

* OPTIONAL . . . but good to have.

- **FRENCH CURVE** A template of metal, plastic, or wood that includes many curved edges for constructing smooth curves.
- **NEEDLE THREADER** An inexpensive aid to make threading the eye of the needle super fast.
- **PINKING SHEARS** These scissors with notched teeth leave a zigzag edge on the cut cloth to prevent fraying.
- **POINT TURNER** A bluntly pointed tool that helps push out the corners of a project and/or smooth seams. A knitting needle or chopstick can also be used.
- **ROTARY CUTTER + SELF-HEALING MAT** Useful for cutting out fabric quickly. Always use the mat to protect the blade and your work surface (a rigid acrylic ruler should be used with these to make straight cuts).
- **TAILOR'S HAM** A firm cushion used when pressing curved areas of garments to preserve the shape and prevent creases.
- **THIMBLE** Your fingers and thumbs will thank you.
- **ZIPPER FOOT** This accessory foot for your machine has a narrow profile that can be positioned to sew close to the zipper teeth. Zipper feet are adjustable so the foot can be moved to either side of the needle.

* sewing basics

PATTERN INSERT GUIDE A quick reference to the full-size patterns and the symbols and markings on the patterns.



● **DARTS** Dashed lines and dots mark darts. The dashed lines show where the stitching will be, and the dot shows you the position of the dart point (signaling the point, at the end of the dart, where your stitching should end).

● **BUTTON + BUTTON-HOLE PLACEMENT MARKS** Solid lines indicate buttonholes. A large open circle is the button symbol and shows placement.

● **CUTTING LINES** Multisize patterns have different cutting lines for each size.

● **PLEATS** Match the notches by folding the fabric, following the direction of the arrows, to form pleats.

● **PATTERN DOTS** Filled circles indicate that a mark needs to be made (often on the right side of the fabric), for placement of elements such as a pocket or a dart point. Mark by punching through the pattern paper only, then mark on the fabric through the hole.

● **GRAINLINE** The double-ended arrow should be parallel to the lengthwise grain or fold unless marked as crosswise. A bias grainline will be diagonal and will be marked "bias".

● **PLACE ON FOLD BRACKET** This is a grainline marking with arrows pointing to the edge of the pattern. Place the pattern edge on the fold of the fabric so that your finished piece will be twice the size of the pattern piece, without having to add a seam. Do not cut the fold.

● **SLASH LINE** The dashed line indicates that the pattern needs to be slashed along the line. Slash to the dots only, if present. If there are no dots, the pattern should be slashed from edge to edge along the entire line.

● **NOTCHES** Notches are triangle-shaped symbols used for accurately matching seams. Pieces to be joined will have corresponding notches.

CB: Center Back **CF:** Center Front

LAYOUT, MARKING + CUTTING GUIDELINES

1 The pattern insert often features overlapping patterns, so you may not want to cut patterns or templates directly from the insert. Instead, use pattern paper (or other paper such as newsprint) or pattern tracing cloth to trace the pattern pieces you need from the insert and then cut out your traced pieces. Regular office paper may be used for small templates that will fit. If necessary, use a light box or bright window for tracing.

2 If you are cutting pattern pieces on the fold or cutting two of the same pattern piece, fold the fabric in half, selvedge to selvedge (or fold as shown in the cutting layouts), with right sides together.

3 All pattern markings should be on the wrong side of the fabric unless otherwise noted.

4 Lay the pattern pieces on the fabric as close together as possible. Double-check that all pattern pieces cut "on the fold" are placed on the fold.

5 Make sure all pattern pieces are placed on the fabric with the grainline running parallel to the lengthwise grain unless a bias grainline is present or as otherwise noted.

6 Use weights to hold the pattern pieces down and use pins to secure the corners as needed.

7 Cut pieces slowly and carefully.

*
sewing
basics**GLOSSARY OF SEWING TERMS
+ TECHNIQUES**

A quick reference to the technical sewing terms used throughout the project instructions.

BACKTACK Stitching in reverse for a short distance at the beginning and ending of a seamline to secure the stitches. Most machines have a button or knob for this function (also called *backstitch*).

BARTACK A line of reinforcement stitching often placed at areas of stress on a garment. Bartacks are created with short zigzag stitches (by machine) or whipstitches (by hand).

BASTING Uses long, loose stitches to hold something in place temporarily. To baste by machine, use the longest straight stitch length available on your machine. To baste by hand, use stitches at least $\frac{1}{4}$ " (6 mm) long. Use a contrasting thread to make the stitches easier to spot for removal.

BIAS The direction across a fabric that is located at a 45-degree angle from the lengthwise or crosswise grain. The bias has high stretch and a very fluid drape.

BIAS TAPE Made from fabric strips cut on a 45-degree angle to the grainline, the bias cut creates an edging fabric that will stretch to enclose smooth or curved edges. You can buy bias tape ready-made or make your own.

BUTTONHOLE SIZING To determine the length of your buttonhole, first measure the button across the width and then add $\frac{1}{8}$ " (3 mm). Some thicker buttons may require adding $\frac{1}{4}$ " (6 mm) to the width measurement. Mark this measurement with a fabric pencil where you want the buttonhole placed; always sew a sample buttonhole on scrap fabric to test the measurement.

CLIPPING CURVES Involves cutting tiny slits or triangles into the seam allowance of curved edges so the seam will

lie flat when turned right side out. Cut slits along concave curves and triangles (with points toward the seamline) along a convex curve. Be careful not to clip into the stitches.

CLIP THE CORNERS Clipping the corners of a project reduces bulk and allows for crisper corners in the finished project. To clip a corner, cut off a triangle-shaped piece of fabric across the seam allowances at the corner. Cut close to the seamline but be careful not to cut through the stitches.

COVERSTITCH A stretchy hemming stitch used most often on knit fabrics, it hems and finishes the raw edge in one step. The stitch is usually created with a coverstitch machine, but is also a stitch option on some sergers. The stitch features 2 or 3 rows of straight stitching on the right side and a row of loops on the wrong side.

DART This stitched triangular fold is used to give shape and form to the fabric to fit body curves.

EASE/EASE IN When a pattern directs to "ease" or "ease in," you are generally sewing a longer piece of fabric to a shorter piece or a curved piece to a straight piece. This creates shape in a garment or object without pleats or gathers. To ease, match the ends or notches of the uneven section and pin together (or pin as instructed by the pattern). Continue to pin the remaining fabric together, distributing the extra fullness evenly, but making sure that the seamlines match up as smoothly as possible (you will be smoothing the excess fullness away from the edge); don't be afraid to use a lot of pins. Stitch slowly, smoothing as necessary to ease the pieces together as evenly

as possible, being careful not to catch tucks in the seam.

EDGESTITCH A row of topstitching placed very close ($\frac{1}{16}$ – $\frac{1}{8}$ " [2–3 mm]) to an edge or an existing seamline.

FABRIC GRAIN The grain is created in a woven fabric by the threads that travel lengthwise and crosswise. The lengthwise grain runs parallel to the selvages; the crosswise grain should always be perpendicular to the lengthwise threads. If the grains aren't completely straight and perpendicular, grasp the fabric at diagonally opposite corners and pull gently to restore the grain. In knit fabrics, the lengthwise grain runs along the wales (ribs), parallel to the selvages, with the crosswise grain running along the courses (perpendicular to the wales).

FINGER-PRESS Pressing a fold or crease with your fingers as opposed to using an iron.

GATHERING STITCH These are long stitches used to compress a length of fabric before sewing it to a shorter piece. To gather, set the machine for a long stitch length (3.0–4.0 mm; use the shorter length for lighter-weight fabrics) and loosen the tension slightly. With the fabric right side up, sew on the seamline and again $\frac{1}{8}$ " (3 mm) from the seamline, within the seam allowance. Sometimes you will be instructed to place the first line of stitches $\frac{1}{8}$ " (3 mm) from the seamline within the body of the garment so the stitches don't become tangled in the permanent seamline. Leave thread tails at each end and do not backtack. Pin the fabric to be gathered to the shorter piece right sides together, matching edges, centers, and pattern markings as directed in the pattern. Pin at each mark.

GLOSSARY OF SEWING TERMS CONT.


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**GLOSSARY OF SEWING
TERMS + TECHNIQUES**

A quick reference to the technical sewing terms used throughout the project instructions.

Grasp the bobbin threads from both lines of stitching at one end and pull gently. Work the gathers along the thread until the entire piece is gathered and lies flat against the shorter fabric piece. Pull the bobbin threads from both ends to gather long pieces. Stitch the seam, then remove the gathering threads.

GRAINLINE A pattern marking showing the direction of the grain. Make sure the grainline marked on the pattern runs parallel to the lengthwise grain of your fabric, unless the grainline is specifically marked as crosswise or bias.

LINING The inner fabric of a garment or bag, used to create a finished interior that covers the raw edges of the seams.

INTERFACING/INTERLINING Material used to stabilize or reinforce fabrics. Fusible interfacing has an adhesive coating on one side that adheres to fabric when ironed. Interlining is an additional fabric layer between the shell and lining, used to change the garment drape or add structure or warmth.

MITER Joining a seam or fold at an angle that bisects the project corner. Most common is a 45-degree angle, like a picture frame, but shapes other than squares or rectangles will have miters with different angles.

OVERCAST STITCH A machine stitch that wraps around the fabric raw edge to finish edges and prevent raveling. Some sewing machines have several overcast stitch options; consult your sewing machine manual for information on stitch settings and the appropriate presser foot for the chosen stitch (often the standard presser foot can be used). A zigzag stitch can be used as an alternative to finish raw edges if your machine doesn't have

an overcast stitch function.

PINK To trim with pinking shears, which cut the edge into a zigzag pattern to reduce fraying.

PLACKET A finished garment opening, a placket is usually closed with buttons, snaps, or zippers.

PRESHRINK Many fabrics shrink when washed; you need to wash, dry, and press all your fabric before you start to sew, following the suggested cleaning method marked on the fabric bolt (keep in mind that the appropriate cleaning method may not be machine washing). Don't skip this step!

RIGHT SIDE The front side, or the side that should be on the outside of a finished garment. On a print fabric, the print will be stronger on the right side of the fabric.

RIGHT SIDES TOGETHER The right sides of two fabric layers should be facing each other.

SATIN STITCH (MACHINE) This is a smooth, completely filled column of zigzag stitches achieved by setting the stitch length to 0.2–0.4 mm. The length setting should be short enough for complete coverage but long enough to prevent bunching and thread buildup.

SEAM ALLOWANCE The amount of fabric between the raw edge and the seam.

SELVEDGE This is the tightly woven border on the lengthwise edges of woven fabric and the finished lengthwise edges of knit fabric.

SHELL The outer fabric of a garment or bag (as opposed to the lining, which will be on the inside).

STITCH IN THE DITCH Press a previously sewn seam open or to one side. Lay

the seamed fabric right side up under the presser foot and sew along the seamline "ditch." The stitches will fall between the two fabric pieces and disappear into the seam.

SQUARING UP After you have pieced together a fabric block or section, check to make sure the edges are straight and the measurements are correct. Use a rotary cutter and an acrylic ruler to trim the block if necessary. Because you might trim off the backtacking on seams when you square up, machine-stitch across any trimmed seams to secure.

TOPSTITCH Used to hold pieces firmly in place and/or to add a decorative effect, a topstitch is simply a stitch that can be seen on the outside of the garment or piece. To topstitch, make a line of stitching on the outside (right side) of the piece, usually a set distance from an existing seam.

UNDERLINING Fabric used as a backing for the shell of a garment to add structure and/or aid in shaping. It is also sometimes used to make a transparent fabric opaque. Underlinings are cut to the size and shape of each garment piece and the two are basted together and treated as one during construction.

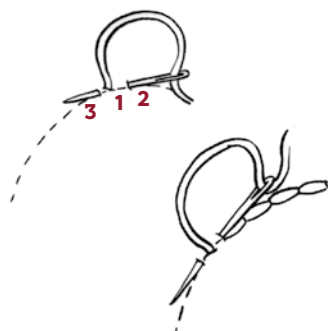
UNDERSTITCHING A line of stitches placed on a facing (or lining), very near the facing/garment seam. Understitching is used to hold the seam allowances and facing together and to prevent the facing from rolling toward the outside of the garment.

WRONG SIDE The wrong side of the fabric is the underside, or the side that should be on the inside of a finished garment. On a print fabric, the print will be lighter or less obvious on the wrong side of the fabric.

* sewing basics

STITCH GLOSSARY

A quick reference to the hand and machine stitches used throughout the project instructions.

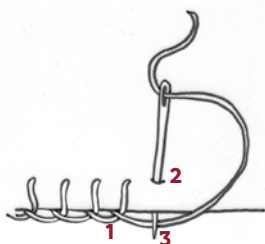


BACKSTITCH ▲

Working from right to left, bring the needle up at **1** and insert behind the starting point at **2**. Bring the needle up at **3**, repeat by inserting at **1** and bringing the needle up at a point that is a stitch length beyond **3**.

BASTING STITCH (MACHINE) ▲

Using the longest straight stitch length on your machine, baste to temporarily hold fabric layers and seams in position for final stitching. It can also be done by hand. When basting, use a contrasting thread to make it easier to spot when you're taking it out.



BLANKET STITCH ▲

Working from left to right, bring the needle up at **1** and insert at **2**. Bring the needle back up at **3** and over the working thread. Repeat by making the next stitch in the same manner, keeping the spacing even.

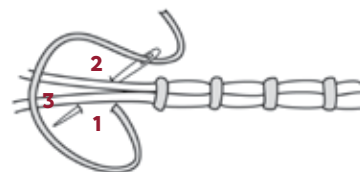
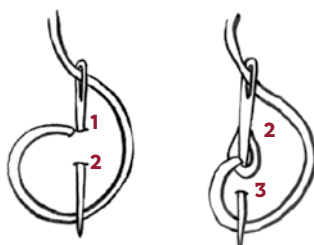
BLINDSTITCH/BLIND-HEM STITCH ▼

Used mainly for hemming fabrics where an inconspicuous hem is difficult to achieve (this stitch is also useful for securing binding on the wrong side). Fold the hem edge back about ¼" (6 mm). Take a small stitch in the garment, picking up only a few threads of the fabric, then take the next stitch ¼" (6 mm) ahead in the hem. Continue, alternating stitches between the hem and garment (if using for a non-hemming application, simply alternate stitches between the two fabric edges being joined).



CHAIN STITCH ▼

Working from top to bottom, bring the needle up at and reinsert at **1** to create a loop; do not pull the thread taut. Bring the needle back up at **2**, keeping the needle above the loop and gently pulling the needle toward you to tighten the loop flush to the fabric. Repeat by inserting the needle at **2** to form a loop and bring the needle up at **3**. Tack the last loop down with a straight stitch.

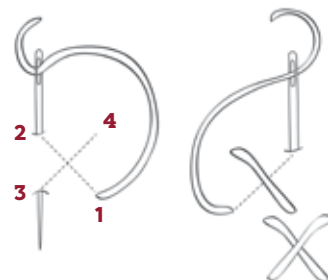


COUCHING ▲

Working from right to left, use one thread, known as the couching or working thread, to tack down one or more laid threads, known as the couched threads. Bring the working thread up at **1** and insert at **2**, over the laid threads to tack them down, bringing the needle back up at **3**. The laid threads are now encircled by the couching thread. Repeat to couch the desired length of thread(s). This stitch may also be worked from left to right, and the spacing between the couching threads may vary for different design effects.

CROSS-STITCH ▼

Working from right to left, bring the needle up at **1**, insert at **2**, then bring the needle back up at **3**. Finish by inserting the needle at **4**. Repeat for the desired number of stitches.



STITCH GLOSSARY CONT.

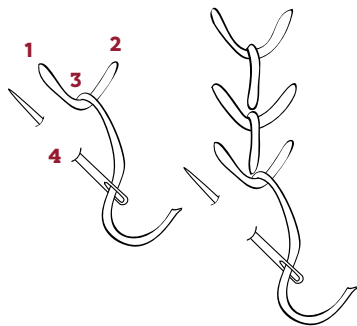
sewing* basics

STITCH GLOSSARY

A quick reference to the hand and machine stitches used throughout the project instructions.

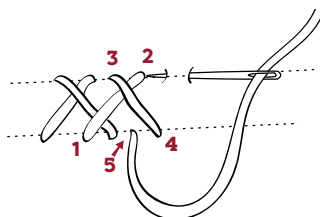
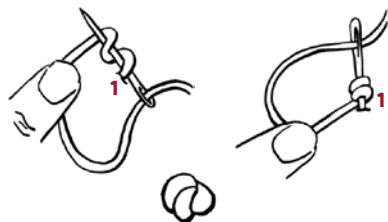
FLY STITCH ▼

Working from left to right, bring the needle up at **1** and insert at **2**, leaving the thread loose. Bring the needle back up at **3**, keeping the needle above the thread and pulling the needle toward you gently to tighten the thread so that it is flush with the fabric. Tack the thread down by inserting the needle at **4**. Repeat for the desired number of stitches.



FRENCH KNOT ▼

Bring the needle up at **1** and hold the thread taut above the fabric. Point the needle toward your fingers and move the needle in a circular motion to wrap the thread around the needle once or twice. Insert the needle near **1** and hold the thread taut near the knot as you pull the needle and thread through the knot and the fabric to complete.

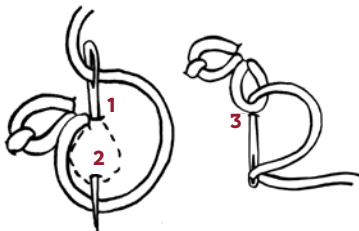


HERRINGBONE STITCH ▲

Working from left to right and bottom to top, and keeping the length of the stitches and the spacing consistent, bring the needle up at **1** and *insert at **2**. Bring the needle back up to the left of **2** at **3**, then insert the needle at **4** and bring back up at **5**. Repeat from * to continue with the next stitch, overlapping the first.

LAZY DAISY STITCH ▼

Working from top to bottom, bring the needle up at **1** and create a loop by reinserting at **1**; do not pull the thread taut. Bring the needle back up at **2**, keeping the needle above the loop and pulling the needle toward you gently to tighten the loop so that it is flush with the fabric. Tack the loop down by inserting the needle at **3**. Repeat for the desired number of stitches.



LAZY DAISY CLUSTERS WITH FRENCH KNOTS ▼

Create three-petal clusters of lazy daisy stitches as shown (with the center petal slightly longer than the others), with a French knot directly across from the base of each cluster.



OVERCAST STITCH (MACHINE)

A machine stitch that wraps around the fabric raw edge to finish edges and prevent raveling. Some sewing machines have several overcast stitch options; consult your sewing machine manual for information on stitch settings and the appropriate presser foot for the chosen stitch (often the standard presser foot can be used). A zigzag stitch can be used as an alternative to finish raw edges if your machine doesn't have an overcast stitch function.

STITCH GLOSSARY CONT.

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STITCH GLOSSARY

A quick reference to the hand and machine stitches used throughout the project instructions.

OVERHAND KNOT ▼

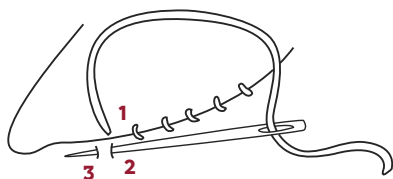
Make a loop with the thread. Pass the cord that lies behind the loop over the front cord, then through the loop and pull snug.



STANDARD HAND-APPLIQUÉ STITCH ▼

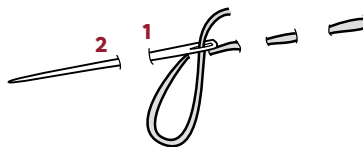
Use this stitch for either the Freezer-Paper (or Template-Plastic)-and-Starch method or the Needle-Turn method.

Cut a length of thread 12" to 18" (30.5 to 45.5 cm long). Thread the newly cut end through the eye of the needle, pull this end through, and knot it. Use this technique to thread the needle and knot the thread to help keep the thread's "twist" intact and to reduce knotting. Beginning at the straightest edge of the appliqué and working from right to left, bring the needle up from the underside, through the background fabric and the very edge of the appliqué at **1**, catching only a few threads of the appliqué fabric. Pull the thread taut, then insert the needle into the background fabric at **2**, as close as possible to **1**. Bring the needle up through the background fabric at **3**, $\frac{1}{8}$ " (3 mm) beyond **2**. Continue in this manner, keeping the thread taut (do not pull it so tight that the fabric puckers) to keep the stitching as invisible as possible.



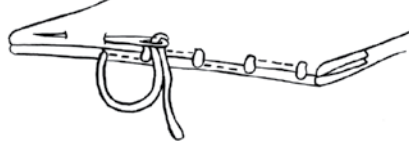
STRAIGHT STITCH + RUNNING STITCH ▼

Working from right to left, make a straight stitch by bringing the needle up and insert at **1**, $\frac{1}{8}$ to $\frac{1}{4}$ " (3 to 6 mm) from the starting point. To make a line of running stitches (a row of straight stitches worked one after the other), bring the needle up at **2** and repeat.



SLIP STITCH ▼

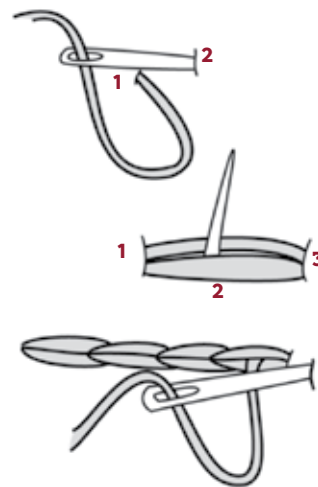
Working from right to left, join two pieces of fabric by taking a $\frac{1}{16}$ - $\frac{1}{4}$ " (2-6 mm) long stitch into the folded edge of one piece of fabric and bringing the needle out. Insert the needle into the folded edge of the other piece of fabric, directly across from the point where the thread emerged from the previous stitch. Repeat by inserting the needle into the first piece of fabric. The thread will be almost entirely hidden inside the folds of the fabrics.



SPLIT STITCH ▼

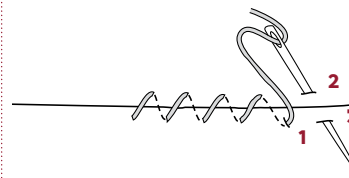
Working from left to right, bring the needle up at **1**, insert at **2**, and bring the needle up near the right end of the previous stitch (between **1** and **2**, at **3**), inserting the needle into the thread to split the thread in two. When you're working

with multiple strands of thread, insert the needle between the strands.



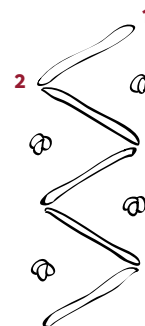
WHIPSTITCH ▼

Bring the needle up at **1**, insert at **2**, and bring up at **3**. These quick stitches do not have to be very tight or close together.



ZIGZAG WITH FRENCH KNOTS ►

Working from right to left, bring the needle up at **1** and insert at **2**. Bringing the needle back up near **2**, repeat for the next stitch, but work from left to right. Complete a French knot near the open end of each zigzag.



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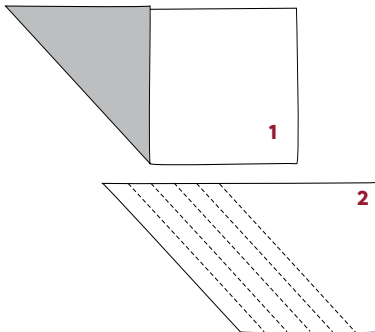
BINDING TECHNIQUES

A quick reference to creating your own binding.

CREATE BINDING

CUTTING STRAIGHT STRIPS

Cut strips on the crosswise grain, from selvage to selvage, cutting to the width indicated in the project instructions. Use a rotary cutter and straight-edge to obtain a straight cut. Remove the selvages and join the strips with diagonal seams.

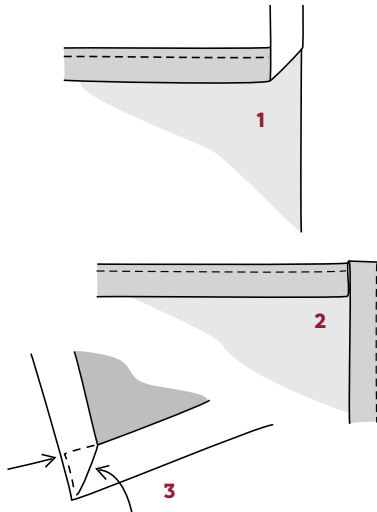


CUTTING BIAS STRIPS ▲

Cut strips to the width indicated in the project instructions. Fold one cut end of the fabric to meet one selvage, forming a fold at a 45-degree angle to the selvage (1). With the fabric placed on a self-healing mat, cut off the fold with a rotary cutter, using a straight edge as a guide to make a straight cut. With the straightedge and rotary cutter, cut strips to the appropriate width (2). Join the strips with diagonal seams.

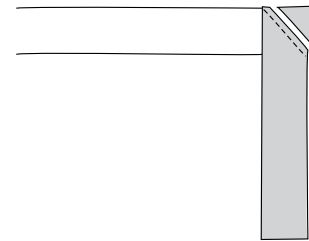
BINDING WITH MITERED CORNERS ▼

If using double-layer binding (option B at right) follow the alternate italicized instructions in parenthesis. Open the binding and press 1/2" (1.3 cm) to the wrong side at one short end (refold the binding at the center crease and proceed). Starting with the folded-under end of the binding, place it near the center of the first edge of the project to be bound, matching the raw edges, and pin in place. Begin sewing near the center of one edge of the project,



along the first crease (at the appropriate distance from the raw edge), leaving several inches of the binding fabric free at the beginning. Stop sewing 1/4" (6 mm) before reaching the corner, backtack, and cut the threads. Rotate the project 90 degrees to position it for sewing the next side. Fold the binding fabric up, away from the project, at a 45-degree angle (1), then fold it back down along the project raw edge (2). This forms a miter at the corner. Stitch the second side, beginning at the project raw edge (2) and ending 1/4" (6 mm) from the next corner, as before. Continue as established until you have completed the last corner. Continue stitching until you are a few inches from the beginning edge of the binding fabric. Overlap the pressed beginning edge of the binding by 1/2" (1.3 cm, or overlap more as necessary for security) and trim the working edge to fit. Finish sewing the binding (opening the center fold and tucking the raw edge inside the pressed end of the binding strip). Refold the binding along all the creases and then fold it over the project raw edges to the back, enclosing the raw edges (there are no creases to worry about with option B). The folded edge of the binding strip should just cover the stitches visible on the

project back. Slip stitch or blindstitch the binding in place, tucking in the corners to complete the miters as you go (3).



DIAGONAL SEAMS FOR JOINING STRIPS ▲

Lay two strips right sides together, at right angles. The area where the strips overlap forms a square. Sew diagonally across the square as shown above. Trim the excess fabric 1/4" (6 mm) away from the seamline and press the seam allowances open. Repeat to join all the strips, forming one long fabric band.

FOLD BINDING ▼

A. Double-fold Binding This option will create binding that is similar to packaged double-fold bias tape/binding. Fold the strip in half lengthwise, with wrong sides together; press. Open up the fold and then fold each long edge toward the wrong side, so that the raw edges meet in the middle (1). Refold the binding along the existing center crease, enclosing the raw edges (2), and press again.

B. Double-layer Binding This option creates a double-thickness binding with only one fold. This binding is often favored by quilters. Fold the strip in half lengthwise with wrong sides together; press.

