

How to Sew a Gift for Any Occasion:

12 Easy Do-It-Yourself

Gift Ideas



ALLFREESEWING 

How to Sew a Gift for Any Occasion: 12 Easy Do-It-Yourself Gift Ideas

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Letter from the Editors

Hi Sewists,

The average person spends hundreds of dollars on gifts every year. While the art of giving is beautiful, you don't need to break your wallet in order to present something lovely to a friend, family member or sweetheart. AllFreeSewing is pleased to present this latest and greatest collection of sewn gift solutions, *How to Sew a Gift for Any Occasion: 12 Easy Do-It-Yourself Gift Ideas*. Find ideas for DIY gifts that cover everything from sewn napkins to eBook reader covers. Whether you need to learn how to sew a gift for an old friend or a hip youngster, these do-it-yourself gift ideas will provide ample inspiration for your gifting needs. Use this guide as a last minute resort when you realize you forgot to pick up that bottle of wine for your hostess. It's here to relieve the unnecessary stress that sometimes accompanies parties and holidays. Learning how to sew a gift for any occasion is a skill you can take with you to the bank – or at least one that will help your bank account. Indulge in these do-it-yourself gift ideas for some easy sewing and terrific gifting.

Happy Sewing!

You can find additional gift ideas and more at www.AllFreeSewing.com.

Our eBooks, like all our sewing projects, are absolutely FREE to members of our sewing community. Please feel free to share with family and friends and ask them to sign up at our website for our [free e-mail newsletter](#).

Happy Sewing,

The Editors of AllFreeSewing

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How to Sew a Gift for Any Occasion: 12 Easy Do-It-Yourself Gift Ideas

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Tie-On Dish Towels

By: [Tanya from Trey and Lucy](#)

With Tie-On Dish Towels, you'll have your handy kitchen accessory close by. Perfect for the last minute-gifter, this simple sewing project can be accomplished in no time at all. Make these DIY towels with bright, fun fabric so that your friend or family member can spruce up their living area a little.



Materials:

- Cheap Dish Towels (from any store)
- Fabric of Your Choice
- Needle & Thread

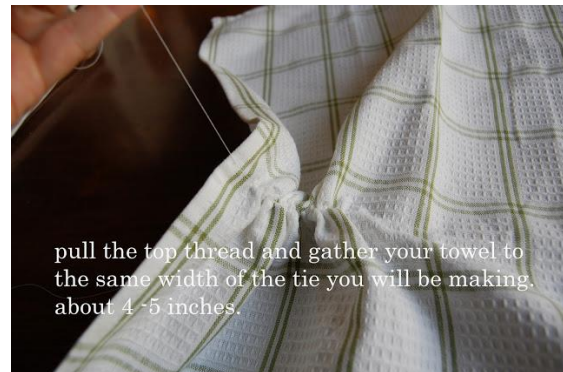


Directions:

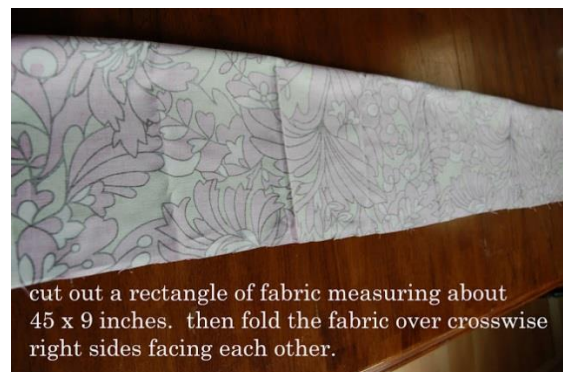
1. Do a basting stitch (stitch length 4, width 0) across the middle of your towel.



2. Pull the top thread and gather your towel to the same width of the tie you will be making (about 4-5 inches).



3. Cut out a rectangle of fabric measuring about 45 X 9 inches. Then fold the fabric over crosswise, right sides facing each other.



4. Sew at about 1/2 inch seam allowance

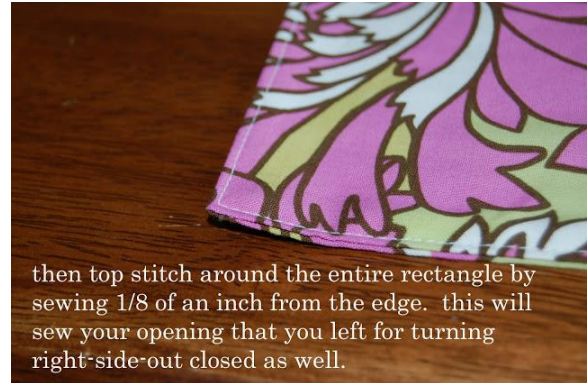
around the entire rectangle, leaving an opening so you can turn it inside-out.



5. Turn it right-side-out, then iron it flat.



6. Top stitch around the entire rectangle by sewing 1/8 of an inch from the edge. This will sew shut your opening as well.



7. Pin your tie in the middle to the middle of your towel and sew across.



8. It will look like this when you're done!



Rick Rack Dish Towels

By: [Anneliese from Aesthetic Nest](#)

The Rick Rack Dish Towels make for a simple sewing project that will add style and function to anyone's kitchen. Gift these dish towels to a gracious hostess, new bride, or family member for the holidays. Follow these easy instructions and find out how easy it is to make (and give) kitchen décor.



Materials:

- Two white kitchen towels
- Four different lengths of rick rack, 1 to 1 1/2 yards each depending on the width of your towels
- Sewing Machine
- Needle & Thread
- Pins
- Scissors

Directions:

1. The first step towards a set of rick rack dish towels is making your selection of rick rack. This tutorial uses a few shades of pink and a true red in various widths. A lot of different combinations would be fun here. There are no rules. Choose whatever looks good to your eye.



2. You'll need 1 yard to 1 1/2 yards of each of the four colors of rick rack you chose to complete two towels. These towels are on the smallish side, so 1 yard is just enough. You could measure twice and then cut and sew, but you might prefer to skip the measuring part and instead sew, and then cut to fit.



3. To finish the end of the rick rack and stop fraying, make a little zigzag stitch (or you could of course serge) a bit back from the end and then trim the rick rack close to the stitching.



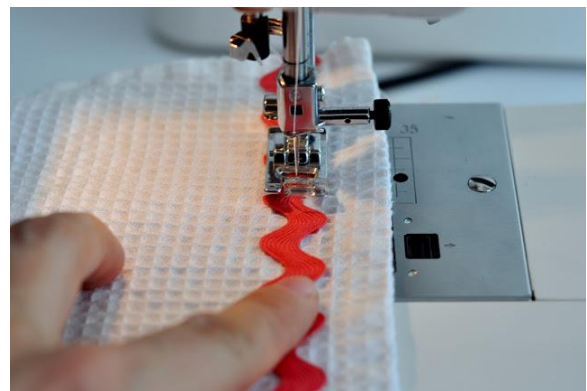
4. Now fold back the rick rack on itself. It's nice if the ridges line up.



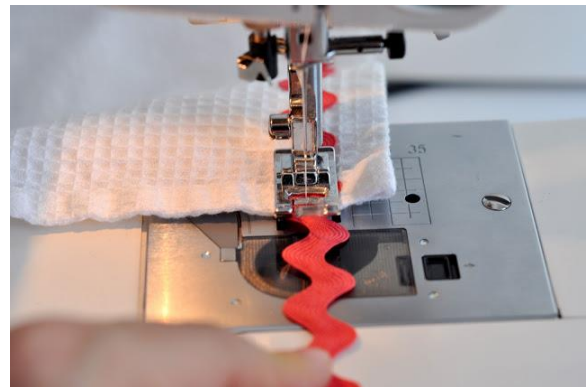
5. Pin on the wrong side of the dish towel where you will start sewing your first line of rick rack.



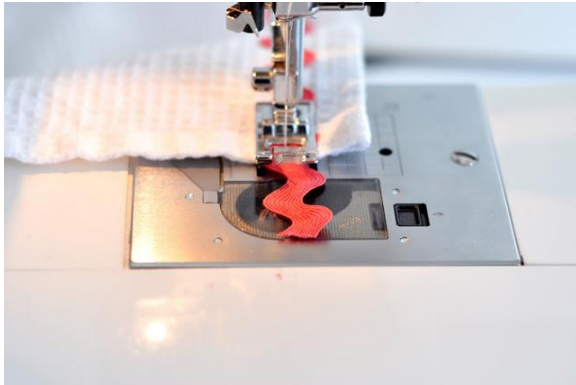
6. Working from the bottom up can make it easier to keep everything straight. You could measure and mark on the towel if that helps. Place the first row of rick rack about one inch from the bottom of the towel and stitch down the middle in a white thread.



7. Afterwards reverse stitch and cut the thread.



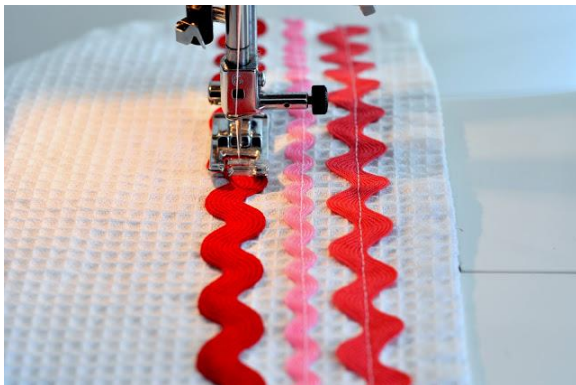
8. Trim the rick rack leaving about 1 inch out from the towel.



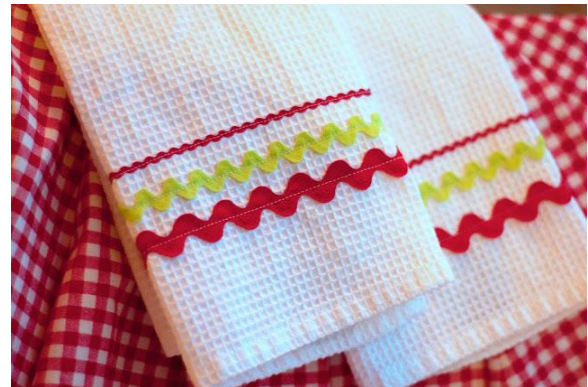
9. Zigzag finish this end and tuck it under towards the back side of the towel. Stitch in place.



10. Continue in the same manner with your other lines of rick rack. You can space your stitching lines about one inch apart and pay attention to the "negative space" between the rows of rick rack to keep them straight.



11. That's it; pretty quick! These are fun for other holidays too, or in your favorite color combinations.



Linen Napkins

By: [Penny from Sew Take a Hike](#)

It's silly to settle for plain or paper napkins for a kitchen. Learn how to make linen napkins that will defy standard style by following this simple sewing tutorial. These instructions make DIY napkins a walk in the park. Their simplistic construction and divine design make them a must for homemade gifts. Gift wrap these kitchen kerchiefs and present them as a housewarming gift, Christmas present, or pick-me-up for a friend.



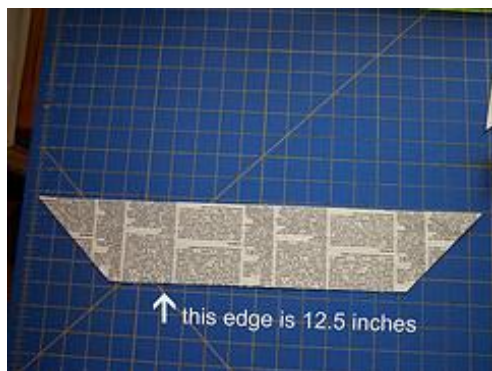
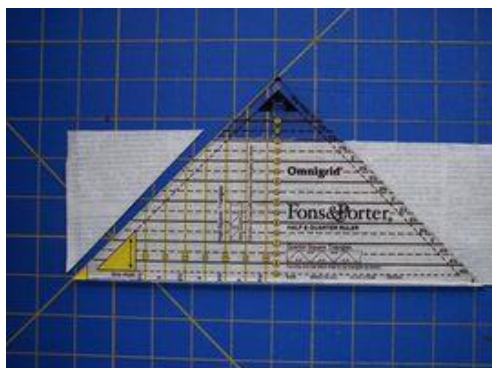
Materials:

- Eight 12.5 inch square pieces of linen in the color you prefer. (Just as a side-note, you should pre-wash since linen shrinks a lot)
- 1 yard and 20 inches of quilting cotton cut into (16) 3.5 inch strips.
- 1" Square Piece of Felt
- (8) 65 inch pieces of embroidery floss (This tutorial uses all six strands of each length)
- A half and quarter ruler (this is handy to have, but not absolutely necessary)



Directions:

1. Using your half and quarter ruler (or cutting mat that has 45 degree markings), cut 32 pieces from your quilting cotton strips that are 45 degrees on each end and 12.5 inches long on the shorter of the long ends. These will be your edging pieces.

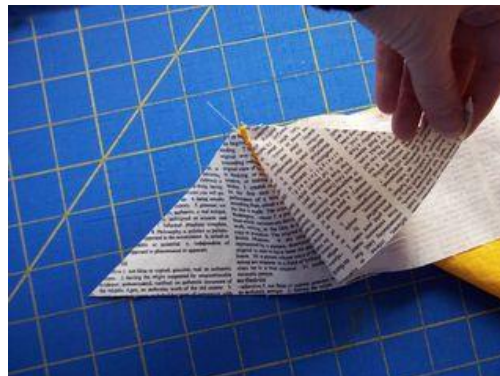


2. With right sides facing, line up one of the edging pieces with one side of a linen square and starting 1/4 inch in, sew the edging piece to the linen, backstitching at the beginning and the end. Repeat this step for all of your sides of the linen.



3. Now, line up the 45 degree ends of your edging fabric with right sides together. Starting at the top, stitch from sewing the edging to the linen; stitch the two edgings together. (This stitch may be exactly 1/4 inch from the fabric

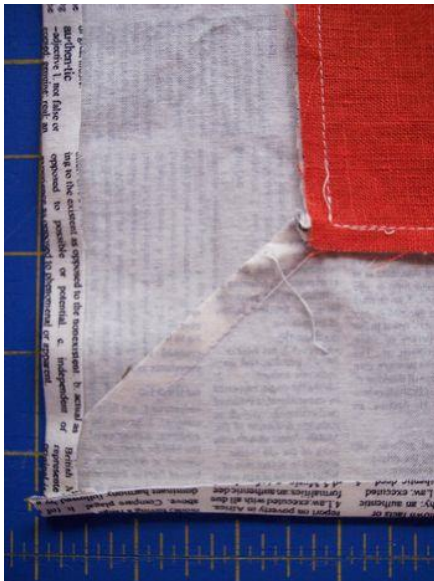
edge, but if not, just make sure to stitch evenly down.) Repeat for all four corners.



4. Open your napkin up and iron all the corner seams to one side.



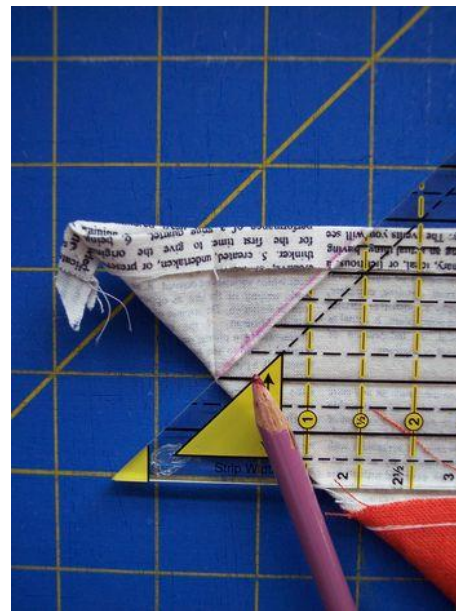
5. Now turn in and iron 1/4 of an inch or so around each side of the edging.



6. Now turn that fold inwards on all four sides until it slightly overlaps the stitching on the linen; iron once more.



7. Open your last fold up, and with right sides of the edging together, use your ruler (or cutting mat) and make a 45 degree mark on the inside of the edging. Starting where the two folds come together, pin in place, and machine stitch on your marking.



8. Trim the corner off within 1/4 inch of the seam, turn the edging right-side-out, and use a bone folder (or corner turner) to push the corner out.



The little blue thing is a rubber needle puller. It helps to grasp the needle and pull it through several layers of fabric

9. Press the edging in place so it just barely covers the stitch line on the linen. Using your embroidery thread, stitch a running stitch around the entire inside edge of the quilting cotton edge. (Just to make it look a little more polished, you can start and end your stitching in between the layers and tuck the knot in there so it doesn't show.)



10. Once you embroider each napkin, machine straight stitch them just inside the embroidery thread with some thread that matches the edging cotton really well (so it doesn't show). This makes them a little sturdier. You're all done!

No Nonsense Napkins

By: [Heidi from Parties for Pennies](#)

Learn how to make napkins from fabric without even picking up a sewing needle. No Nonsense Napkins are the perfect homemade gift to whip up when your sewing machine is down or you just need a break from needle crafts. Make fabric napkins like these with a little paint and inspiration. Whomever receives these DIY napkins will love the personal touch they bring to the kitchen or powder room. Whether you make them as a homemade Christmas gift or for a birthday, these napkins will be well received and well used.



Materials:

- Flour sack towels
- Wine cork

- Paint and/or fabric paint pen
- Fabric medium & paint brush (if you're using paint)
- Foam board/stamp for leaf stamp (optional)
- Old t-shirt or towel
- Iron



Directions:

1. It is really easy to mix the fabric medium with your paint. Just add equal parts of each. This tutorial uses silver and red acrylic paint to create a holly branch-like pattern.



Using a thin paint brush, create the silver stems. If you like you can use a homemade leaf stamp from foam board or sponge.

2. For berries, simply use an old cork as a stamp.



3. Once you've completed your pattern, allow it to dry for 24 hours. Then place an old t-shirt or towel over your artwork and iron for 20 seconds. Move the iron around by picking it up and placing on each area you're working on. This heat sets the paint onto the fabric.



Sew Easy Dish Mat

By: [Robin from All Things Heart & Home](#)

This Sew Easy Dish Mat is a great last-minute gift, because it holds those drying cups and saucers in style. Give the gift of DIY home decor that maintains a standard of aesthetic appeal and functionality by sewing this dish mat. In the process of sewing strips of fabric and terry cloth together, you'll decrease that overwhelming scrap stash and make something brilliant. Don't stop with homemade gifts, make this dish mat for your own kitchen as well.



Materials:

- Fabric Scraps or Strips
- Scissors
- Needle and Thread or Sewing Machine
- Iron
- Terry cloth

Directions:

1. Begin by cutting fabric scraps into 2 to 3 inch strips (or use a jelly roll of fabric).
2. Sew your strips together to make a square.

3. After sewing the strips to make a square, iron the square. Reinforce the seams by sewing on the right side of the fabric all the way down each strip.



4. With right sides together, sew a square of terry cloth to the square of strips, leaving two inch's open so you can turn the dish pad right-side-out.



5. Turn under the raw edges of your two inches and iron the whole dish pad.
6. To finish: sew on right side of fabric around the outside of the dish pad.



If you make a couple of small rectangle pads they can go under the pup's water bowl.



These also work well under the mixer, allowing it to slide over the counter top when baking.



Drink Coaster Tutorial

By: Jen from [Reanna Lily Designs](http://ReannaLilyDesigns.com)

Drink coasters make for an unexpected but always appreciated homemade gift. If you've always wanted to learn how to make drink coasters and have a list of gifts to make, try this simple sewing project. The Drink Coaster Tutorial will show you how to create cute and useable coasters that the receiver will love. Give some life and protection to your friend or family member's coffee table by sewing these DIY coasters in less than an hour.



Materials:

- Find a few pieces that either ARE 5" square or can be pieced to a 5" square (NOTE: 3 squares of fabric and 1 square of batting to make one coaster)
- Sewing Machine
- Spool of Ribbon & Pen/Pencil
- Scissors
- Iron
- Fusible Interfacing
- 4 Straight Pins
- Batting Scraps (Optional)

Directions:

1. To make the applied circle: take your spool of ribbon and use it as your circle template.



2. Trace the circle onto the fabric. Cut out the fabric. This tutorial uses SteamASeam2 for fusible applique. Trace the same circle onto the sheet of fusible.



3. Now, follow the manufacturer's directions and iron/fuse the circles onto one of your 5" squares.



4. You can use batting scraps in this project as well. Piece together the batting using a wide, long zigzag stitch. The edges of batting are butted up against each other, not overlapping.



5. Lay the applique coaster top on the batting. Use the coaster top to cut my batting to 5" square, matching the top.



6. Make a mini-quilt sandwich with the coaster top, the batting, and a coaster back. Secure it with 4 straight pins.



7. It's ready to be quilted. This project sort of channel-stitched a grid. Start in the corner.



8. Then use your presser foot as a guide to sew in parallel lines across the whole coaster top.

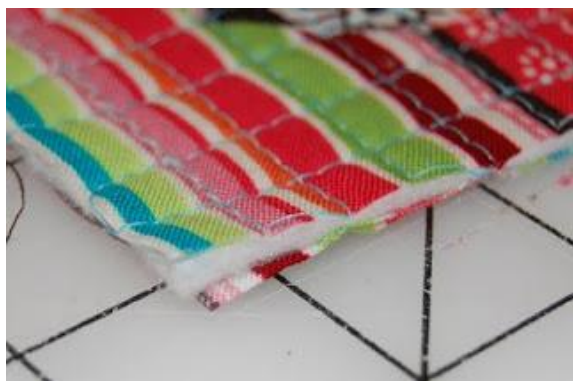


9. Go back and quilt perpendicular to those lines, in the same manner.



10. Just like quilting a larger quilt top,

sometimes there's some stretching and shifting. This will leave the edges uneven.



11. Take the quilted coaster to your work surface and trim it to be a 4 1/2" square. Pay attention so the circle will still be centered on the finished design.



12. Ready to finish the edges. Set your sewing machine to a mid-width zigzag stitch. In this tutorial the stitch length was set at zero.



13. Lay the coaster on your sewing machine, matching the cut edge up with your needle's center position. When you sew the zigzag stitch it will work like an "over cast" stitch on a serger.



14. Start stitching around the perimeter of the drink coaster to finish the cut edges.



15. To make the thread denser and leave virtually no fabric showing through, simply make another pass around the coaster, sewing over the zigzag stitches you've just created.



Ruffled Kindle Case

By: [Suzanne from Just Another Hang Up](#)

Thinking of homemade gift ideas doesn't have to be a hassle anymore. Nowadays, items like this Ruffled Kindle Case are well appreciated by most savvy tech-goers. Learn how to make a cover for a kindle that adds personality to any of those e-readers. Simple sewing projects like this one involve adding ruffles, buttons, and cording to a case. Having made something that accommodates one of the latest advances in technology, you'll feel pretty savvy yourself by the end of this.

Note: The case will fit any Kindle that is 7.5 inches x 4.8 inches x .45 inches or smaller. In other words the case will hold a Kindle, Kindle Touch, Kindle Touch 3G, Kindle Keyboard 3G or Kindle Fire. (The case, however, is too small for a Kindle DX.)



Materials:

- Two 6 ¾ x 9" front and back (muslin, linen, or cotton)
- Two 6 ¾ x 9" lining (contrasting cotton)
- Two 6 ¾ x 9" fusible fleece
- One 5" x 14" contrasting cotton fabric for ruffle
- 6 ½" length of cording
- 9 ½" length of ½" twill tape

- One ¾" button

Note: 3/8" seam allowance unless otherwise stated. Finished measurements of bag approximately 5.5" x 8".

Directions:

1. Prep Work: Cut out all pieces of fabric and apply fusible fleece to wrong side of the case front and back.



2. Making the Ruffle: (see photos below)

a.) Fold ruffle in half lengthwise -- right sides together -- and sew 1/8" from the unfinished edge. (Just sew the long side -- not the ends.)

b.) Press seam open.

c.) Turn the fabric right-side-out and press so that the seam is down the middle on one of the sides. This "seamed" side will become the underside of the ruffle.

d.) Sew a basting stitch $3/8$ " from the middle seam along both sides of the seam. Don't trim thread's ends. These basting stitches will be used to gather your ruffle. Turn your fabric right side up. Gently pull the two threads on the front of the ruffle, leaving the threads on the back of the ruffle alone. Gather the fabric as you pull. When your gather reaches the middle of the ruffle, shift to the two front threads on the right side of the ruffle and repeat. Keep gathering the fabric toward the center point until your gathered fabric is the length you want it to be.



3. Attaching the Ruffle: Once the ruffle is gathered, attach it to the case front, making sure it is centered properly on the front.



Sew ruffle to case front using a regular stitch right down the middle of the basting stitches. Remove the basting stitches.



4. Twill Tape: Pin the twill tape down the center of the ruffle and sew close to the edge of the tape.



5. Cording: Cut cording and attach the loop to the back of the case in the middle at the top. You can tape the ends of the cording with a little masking tape so the cording is less likely to pull through the seam.



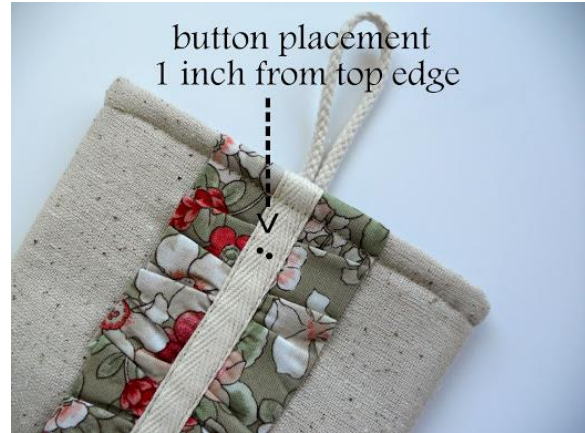
7. Case Front & Back: Pin case front to case back, right sides together, at side and bottom seams. Stitch seams together, trim seams, turn right-side-out, and press.



6. Lining: Pin together lining pieces, right sides together. Stitch sides together, pivoting at the corners and leaving a 3" opening on the bottom seam. Back-stitch at the opening to ensure your stitches are secure. Trim seams and set aside.



8. Sewing Lining to Ruffled Case: Slip case into lining -- right sides together. Match seams and pin. Sew around top of case and zig-zag the edges. (Pay special attention to the area where the cording is; make sure it is very secure.)



You've now completed your "Ruffled Kindle Case"!

9. Finishing Touches: Turn case right-side-out by pulling the bag through the opening in the bottom of the lining. When case is right-side-out, sew seam together at the bottom of the lining 1/8" from edge. Tuck lining into case and press the front and back of your Kindle case.



Top-stitch 3/8" around the top of the case, then sew button 1" from the top edge. Press once again and you're done!



Coffee Cozy With Button

By: [Robin from All Things Heart & Home](#)

When you're heading out to party and realize you forgot to get a gift, don't panic. This DIY cozy is the perfect, simple, homemade gift for moments when you're in a pinch. Give a gift that protects one's hand, is eco-friendly, and looks great. DIY gifts to make rarely possess such multi-functionality.

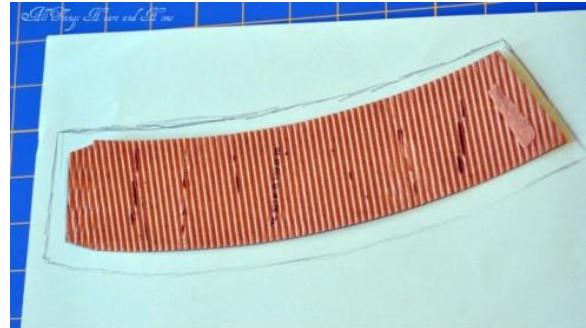


Materials:

- Fabric for the front of cozy (6" by 14")
- Fabric for the lining of cozy (6" by 14")
- Fusible Batting (6"by 14")
- Button
- Hair elastic
- Fray Check
- Old disposable coffee sleeve (for the pattern)
- Iron
- Sewing Machine
- Pins, scissors, and faint marker or pencil
- Heat and Bond Vinyl (optional)

Directions:

1. First, trace around the sleeve leaving about 1/2" seam allowance.



2. From the pattern, cut out a front and back fabric and a piece of Fusible Quilter's Batting.



3. Following the easy batting instructions, iron the batting to the wrong side of the lining fabric.

4. With the right sides together, pin and sew layers (1/2" seam allowance) leaving about 3" open.

5. Trim seams and turn to right side, work with the shape until you have the cozy looking like the disposable sleeve. Press, folding under the open 3 inches to prepare for the top stitch.

6. Sew along the outside around the entire cozy, closing the opening as you go.

7. One way to do the next step is to measure the overlap on the cozy. You could also do the following:

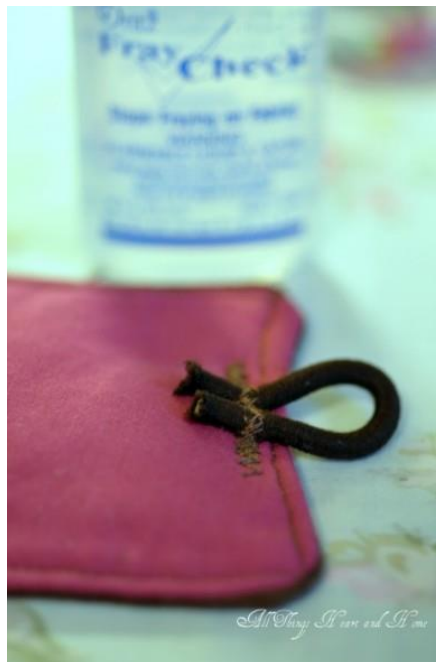
Pin your elastic in place on the lining side and wrap the cozy around the cup. Estimate where your button might go and put pins in button holes straight through the (empty) cup. Carefully stretch the elastic over the button. Adjust as needed and using an Air Erasable Marker (or a very faint pencil dot), mark where your button should be sewn. Sew it on.



8. Sew your elastic. You can go back and forth using a zig-zag stitch.



9. Cut off the stray ends of the elastic and use Fray-Check to keep it from unraveling.



10. If you love the look of the burlap but don't like the way it feels, apply Heat and Bond Vinyl to the burlap cozy. Simply iron the vinyl to the burlap (following the instructions that come with the Heat and Bond) before you do any sewing and proceed with the rest of the instructions!



15 Minute Mouse Pad Wrist Rest

By: [Jill from Creating My Way to Success](#)

Give a gift that strays from tradition with this 15 Minute Mouse Pad Wrist Rest. With the onset of computers, wrists have certainly received a workout. The recipient of this handy homemade gift will thank you for the relief it provides. Both a quick sewing project and one beginners can master, this wrist rest is the perfect last-minute gift or stocking stuffer.



Materials:

- Piece of material 24cm x 16cm (9.5 x 6.25")
- Scissors
- Pins
- Sewing Machine
- Rice Pack
- Funnel

Directions:

1. Take your material and fold in half lengthways with right sides together and pin.



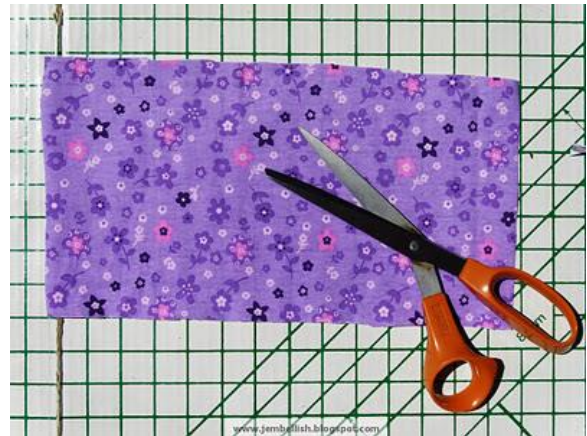
2. Stitch around the edges, leaving a gap of around 3cm (1") to turn out. Snip corners.



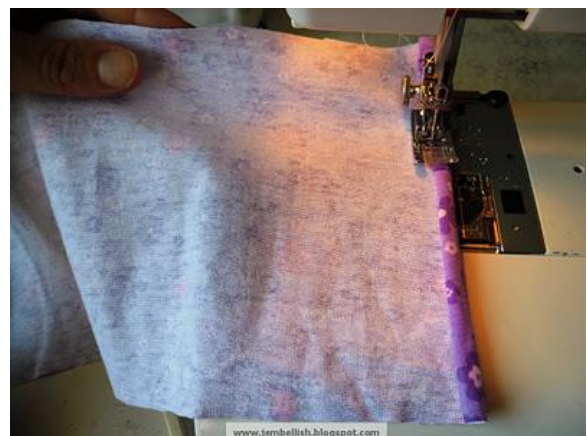
3. Turn right sides out through the gap, and then fill 2/3 full with dry rice using a funnel.



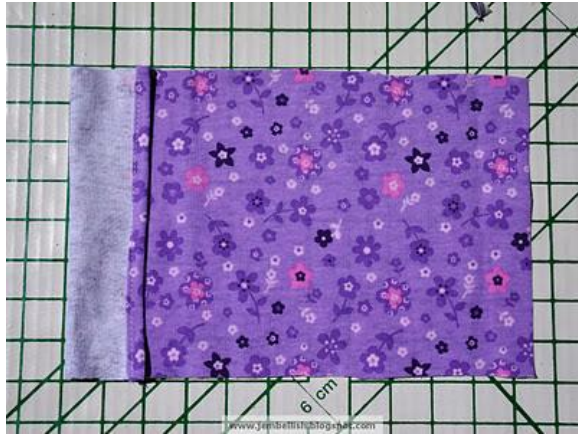
5. For the cover, cut a piece of fabric 28 x 16cm (11 x 6.25"). Double turn one of the shorter edges and stitch to neaten.



4. Pin and machine stitch the gap closed.



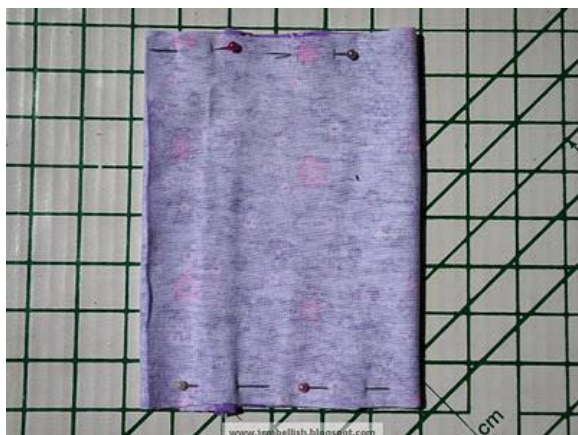
6. Finally lay the rectangle of fabric right side up, fold the finished short end in 4cm (1.5").



7. Fold the other end over, like this:



8. Then pin and stitch along the top and bottom sides:



9. Turn right sides out and slide in your rice pack.

No Sew Eyeglasses Case

By: [Jessica from Two Shades of Pink](#)

This no sew project takes no time at all to make. You'll be surprised by how quickly and easily you can create the No Sew Eyeglasses Case. Perfect for a quick gift, all you need to do to make this simple DIY gift is find a cute potholder and follow this tutorial. Craft this handy accessory for someone who could use a little glam for their shades.



Materials:

- Potholder
- Fabric glue
- Clothespins

Directions:

Refer to graphic below for visual aid.

1. Choose a cute potholder, preferably in a square shape.

2. Cut the loop that allows the potholder to hang, careful not to cut it too short.

3. Use fabric glue to glue the piece down.



4. Glue down the top and left side of the potholder.

5. Fold from the bottom up and press firmly; this creates your glasses case.

6. Clamp until completely dry.



Easy and Cheap Apron for Hostess

By: [Heidi from Parties for Pennies](#)

If you need to make a gift for your hostess in a short amount of time, the Easy and Cheap Apron for Hostess is your go-to project. No sew crafts like this one are great because they're so simple to create. While this tutorial uses no-sew adhesive, you can also substitute glue with stitching if you have a machine handy. Either way, this simple project is quick and gives you the most bang for your buck.



Materials:

- Microfiber kitchen towel
- 2 types of ribbon (one patterned, one plain)
- No sew adhesive



Directions:

1. Use the adhesive to adhere the patterned ribbon to the top of the towel.
2. Take the plain ribbon and fasten it around the rest of the edges of the towel with the adhesive.



3. Let dry. You're done!
4. You don't even need a gift bag. Use your secured ribbons as you would wrapping and tie a bow around your folded apron.



Casserole and Pie Carrier

By: [Shannon from Northern Girl Stamper](#)

The Casserole and Pie Carrier is the perfect tote when it comes to gift-giving. This easy sewing project is not only simple to make, it also revolutionizes wrapping. Cover your contributory dish in a DIY casserole carrier as an extra way of gifting to your hosts. They'll love the functionality and sturdiness of this homemade present.



Materials:

- Scissors
- Two 17 x 17" squares of fabric (for outside print and stabilizer)
- Two 5 1/2 by 5 1/2" blocks (for handles)
- One 5 1/2 by 17" strip (for longer handle)
- Sewing Machine
- Iron

Directions:

1. Place the right sides of fabric together and then place the stabilizer to one of the sides.

2. Sew all of the squares together on 3 full sides; on the 4th side leave a 3.5" opening for turning.

3. Turn right sides out, press all 4 sides and then sew 1/4 inch around all 4 sides.

4. To create the handles you will cut two 5 1/2" x 5 1/2" blocks. You will then press two sides 1/4".

5. Now fold the other two open ends, wrong sides together, and press.

6. Open and press each end into the middle pressed part. This will create the short carrier loops for the handle to come through.

7. To create the handle you will cut one 5 1/2 x 17" strip and do the same thing you just did with the short loops.

8. Sew the two short pieces to a corner opposite of each other.

9. Sew the long handle to the two other opposite sides.



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A special thanks to our contributors:

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