

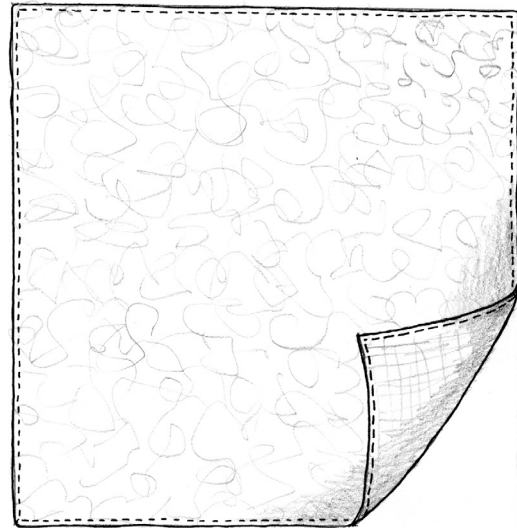


Bread Cloth

Introduction

Bread cloths are serviceable items that are fun to make. You will use a basic technique of sewing 2 pieces of fabric right sides together, turning them right side out and then top stitching. You will also learn some pressing tips.

Use the same fabric on both sides of your bread cloth or, if you prefer, use 2 complementary fabrics. For further sewing practice, when you are finished with your bread cloth use the same instructions to make some of the alternative projects at the end of the video!



Tools, Supplies & Materials

Tools & Equipment

- Sewing machine
- Steam iron & ironing board
- Rotary Cutter*, cutting mat* & rotary cutting ruler*
- Small ruler or seam guide
- Straight pins
- 4" Sewing scissors*
- Dressmaker shears
- Marking pencil or chalk marker*
- Point turner

Fabric & Notions

Use light- to medium-weight cotton fabric. Choose from a wide variety of prints, solids and seasonal or themed fabrics. When using a complementary fabric on the reverse side, select a similar weight as the front.

- 100% cotton fabric large enough to cut 2 18¹/₂" squares
- Thread to match each fabric



Right side of outer fabric



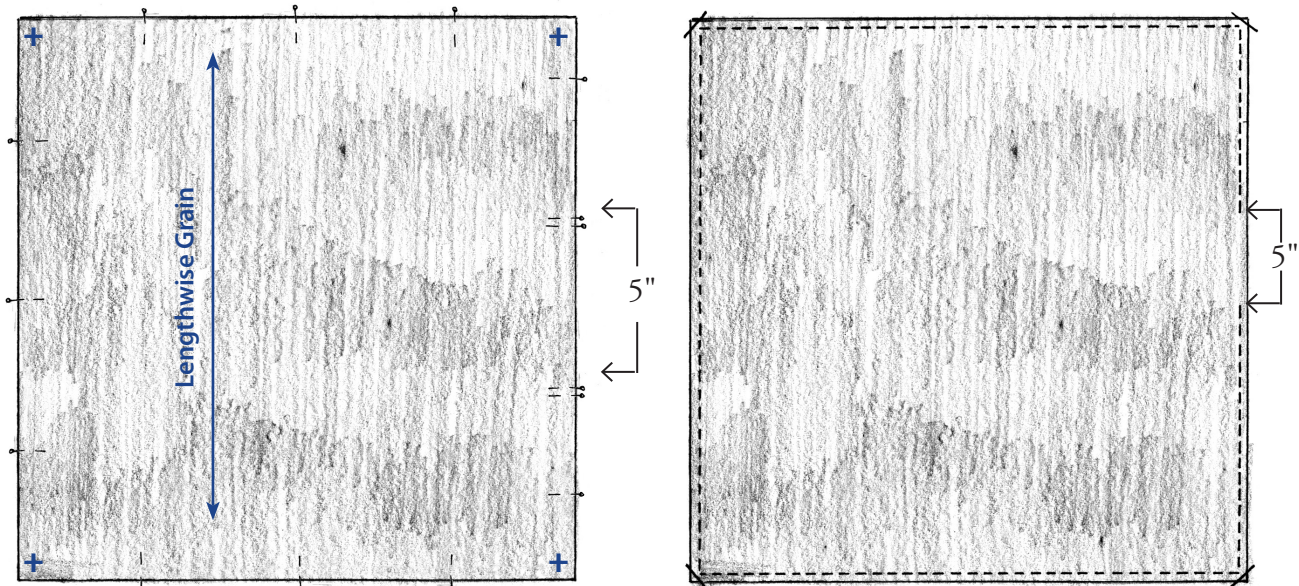
Wrong side of outer fabric



Complementary

* See Sewing Suppliers List at end of document.

Instructions



Cutting Out

Cut out the rectangles of fabric using the rotary cutting system or make a paper pattern. You can cut both pieces of fabric together with the rotary cutter. If your fabric is larger than your mat, you will need to fold the fabric.

Pin the 2 Pieces Together

- Place the fabric squares right sides together, matching the selvage edges. It is important to lay the **grain** lines the same on both pieces. You will want to leave your opening on the **lengthwise grain** (the selvage edge). If you mix the lengthwise and **crosswise grain** sides, the crosswise fabric may stretch and cause problems.

- Using a small ruler and a fabric marker, place an **x** on all 4 corners, $\frac{3}{8}$ " in from the both edges of the top fabric piece. This will tell you where to pivot as you sew.
- Pin all four edges together. Leave a 5" opening in the center of one of the lengthwise grain edges. Mark both sides of the 5" opening with a double pin to remind you not to sew the opening closed (*above, left*).

Sewing

- Beginning at the double pins on one side of the opening, sew around the bread cloth with a $\frac{3}{8}$ " seam, pivoting at the corners and backstitching at the beginning and end (*above, right*).

Grain Test

- Try stretching the fabric along the selvage edge. This is the lengthwise grain and it will not stretch much because it is a very tight weave. Stretch the fabric on the adjacent edge. This is the crosswise grain. It will stretch slightly.

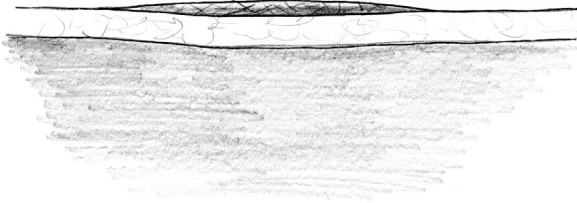
Good Sewing Habit Reminder

- When first learning to sew a straight seam, most beginners tend to watch the needle as they sew. Instead, focus on the seam guide on the machine's throat plate.

Trim and Invert

- It is important to trim your corners to eliminate the bulk. Trim diagonally around the corners, snipping close, but not *too* close or you will have a hole in your cloth!

Pressing Tip: When you turn the bread cloth right side out, you will want to iron the opening closed. To make that easier, make a crease by ironing the seam allowance folded back along the seam line, right across the opening. Flip the cloth over and do the same on the other side.



- Turn the bread cloth right side out, then use a point turner to gently bring the corners to a square point.

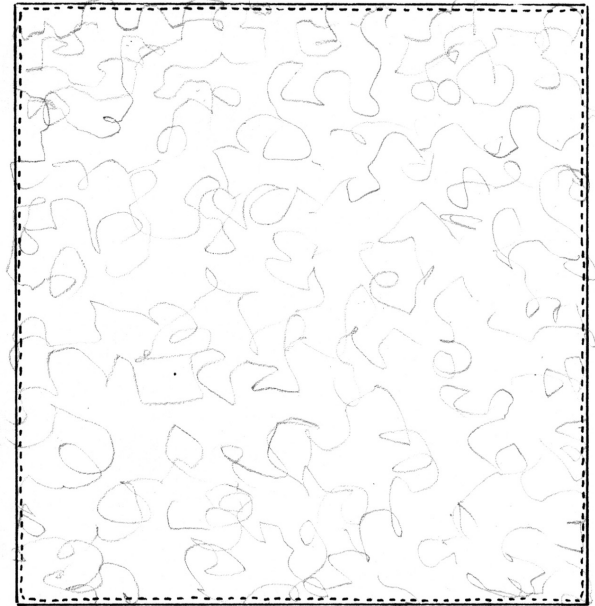
Press the Seams

- Along one side, **finger press** the seam open. Gently **roll the seam** to the edge.
- Once the seam is rolled, press the edge with the iron. Taking the time to press carefully is a key for a crisp, neatly finished project.
- Continue this process for the other sewn sides: finger press, roll the seam and then press the rolled seam with an iron.

Sewing Tip

Pressing accurately is as important as sewing straight. Finger pressing the right side of the seam and rolling the seam to the edge *before* you iron it will eliminate tucks on the edge of the seam called seam wells.

- On the side with the opening, finger press and roll the short seams on the ends. Then press the whole edge, lining up the creased edges that you pressed before you turned the bread cloth right side out.



Topstitch

When topstitching, take extra care to sew so that your stitches are straight.

- Instead of backstitching to secure your thread, adjust the stitch length on your

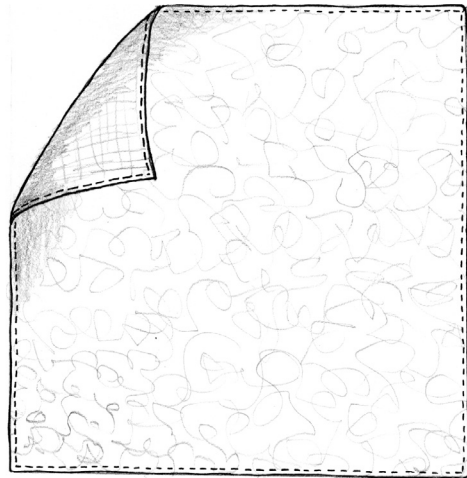
Straight Sewing Tip

- Plant your middle finger a short distance in front of the presser foot on the sewing machine table. This will act as a guide to automatically feed the fabric straight. Place your index finger lightly on the surface of the cloth. Let the feed dog carry the cloth along, sliding it past your fingers. Watch to make sure the fabric feeds in straight.

machine to a *short* stitch and begin stitching at the corner. Do several small stitches. Then adjust your machine to a stitch that is a little *longer* than normal. Continue to sew along the edge of the fabric, taking extra care to make the stitching straight (*right*).

- Slow down as you get to the corners. With your needle down, pivot the corners.
- Once you near the end, stop about 1/4" from where your stitching began. Set your machine to a very short stitch and sew until you reach the beginning stitches. This is a neat way to end your stitching.

Your bread cloth is completed! It is ready to press and use.



Review this video: [Project 6: Bread Cloth](#)

Watch the next video: [Project 7: Basic Pillowcase](#)

Alternate Projects

Following the instructions for the bread cloth, you can make several other projects by just changing the size or shape of the fabric squares or rectangles. From this one simple method of putting your fabric right sides together, sewing,

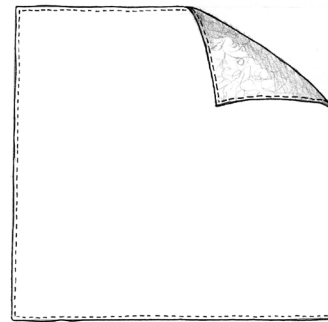
turning and topstitching it, you can make napkins, doll blankets, baby receiving blankets, child snugglies and table runners! Have fun while you are accomplishing a lot of practice sewing straight seams.

Doll Blanket

You will need:

Fabric for two 14" x 18" rectangles. Use light- to medium-weight cotton or light-weight flannel for this project.

- Cut 2 fabric squares 14" x 18".
- Continue sewing as you did the bread cloth.

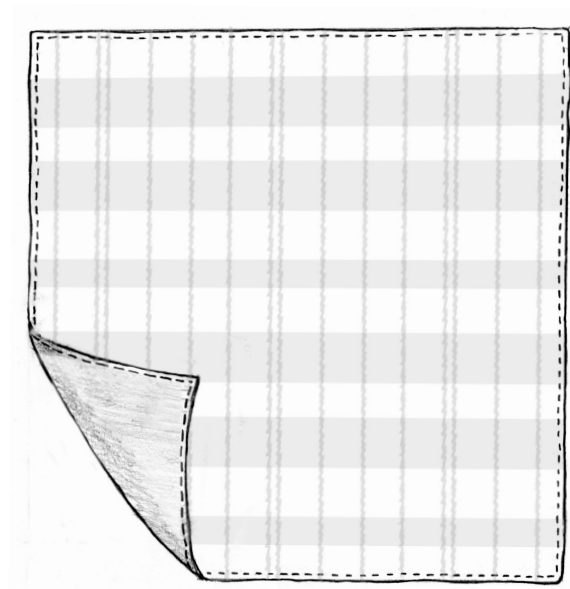


Baby Receiving Blanket

You will need:

Fabric for two 36" squares. Use light- to medium-weight cotton or flannel for this project. You can use flannel for one or both sides.

- Cut 2 fabric squares 36".
- Continue sewing as you did the bread cloth.



Child's Snuggly

You will need:

- Fabric for two 12" squares
- 5" of ribbon per ribbon loop (optional)

If you are a beginner, the easiest fabric to use for this project is 2 pieces of flannel.

Fabric tip: There are lots of soft, textured, plush and minky types of fabrics available, but they are harder to work with. You will have to use many pins to keep the 2 pieces from stretching and sliding.

If you choose a minky fabric, use a ball point needle in your sewing machine rather than a regular, sharp one. With super soft, plush type fabrics, be prepared for a challenge!

- With right sides together, cut two 12" fabric squares.



- If you want to add ribbon loops, cut 1 or more pieces of ribbon 5" long. Fold each ribbon in half to make a loop.
- Before the snuggly pieces are pinned together, pin the loops on one of the right-side-up fabric pieces. Be sure the ribbon is extending onto the fabric. You can put loops along an edge or around the corners – wherever you want them. Make sure that you backstitch across them so that they are secure.
- Continue sewing as you did for the bread cloth.

Table Runner

This runner can be pointed on the ends or it can be square. Use medium weight cotton of the same or complementary fabrics. You can also use upholstery fabrics, but they are harder to sew with. Still, these heavier fabrics have a nice weight and finish for this project.

Note: If you choose upholstery fabrics, it is best not to get one that has nylon in it, because it may melt when you press it.

You can make your table runner any length or width desired.

- Lay the fabrics together with the lengthwise grain going in the same direction. Smooth them flat.

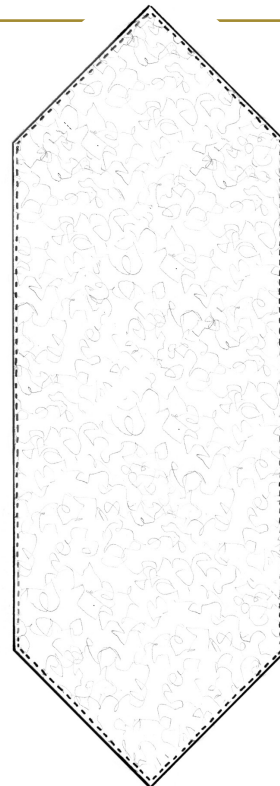
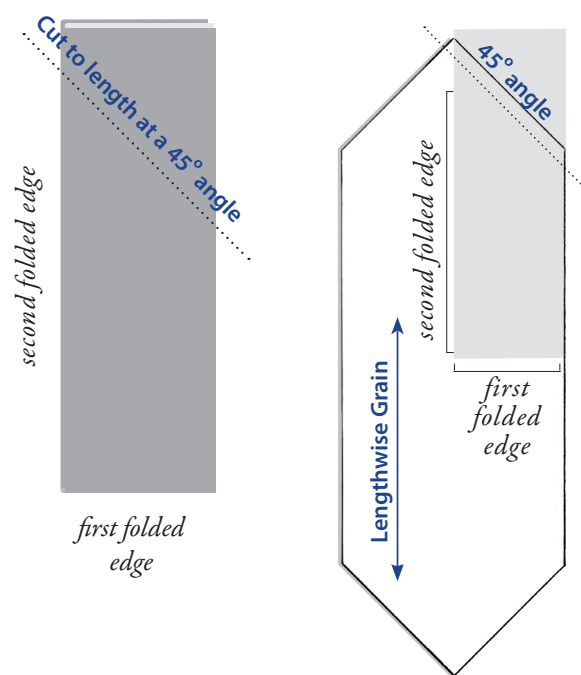


Table Runner, cont.

- Fold them over lengthwise and smooth again. Then fold them in half in the other direction. Smooth out any fullness.
- Line your grid ruler up lengthwise along the fold. Trim the outer (non folded) edges off.
- To make the point, lay the 45° angle line of your grid ruler along the lengthwise fold near the non-folded end of your fabric. Cut off the fabric near the top of the non folded edge, making the runner the length you want.
- Open up the runner. It will be the shape on the far right. Both runner fabrics will be identical in shape and size.
- Continue to sew as you did the bread cloth.



Alternate Topstitching

- If your sewing machine has some decorative stitches, this is a fun time to select a few to sew around the edge. See the snuggly in the Alternative Projects section at the end of the video.
- Try using variegated thread that coordinates with the color of your fabric. This thread looks nice with the regular topstitching method. See the baby blanket in the video.
- If you would like a lot of topstitching practice and you feel like you can stitch straight, you can topstitch 2 or 3 rows of the regular method around a larger project. Sew the lines of

stitching close together. See the baby blanket in the video.

- You can also hand stitch around the item's edge with embroidery floss. This makes a nice, hand-sewn finish. If you would like, the stitches can be long and run a little further from the edge. See the doll blanket near the end of the video.

Remember, practicing sewing is the best way to help you develop your sewing skills. Have fun being creative as you practice sewing these projects with a lot of straight seams.

Questions about Sewing?

Submit any questions for Crissa in the Q&A section on the course homepage or post it to our blog at www.sustainlife.org/blog/category/sewing/

Sewing Suppliers

Simply Fabrics

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- [9 Pillowcase with Contrasting Band](#)
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