

Simple SEWING

HOMEWARES • UPCYCLING • RECIPES • GIFT IDEAS • REFASHION • WARDROBE



INSIDE!

FULL STEP-BY-STEP
INSTRUCTIONS FOR EASY
SEWING PROJECTS - NO
PATTERNS REQUIRED!





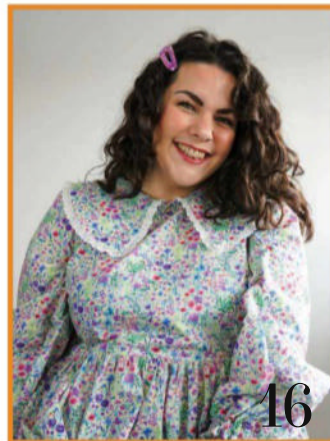


SIMPLE SEWING

Sewing is more than just a craft - it's a way to create, relax, and connect with a community of like-minded makers. Inside, you'll find 16 beginner-friendly projects designed to help you build confidence and enjoy the process. From handmade clothes and thoughtful gifts to cosy homewares, every project is simple, achievable, and requires no complicated tools. Plus, we've included some delightful recipes to enjoy along the way - because creativity isn't just for the sewing room, right?

The Mollie Makes team x

16 EASY PROJECTS TO SEW TODAY



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gathered.
Discover your next craft project

COUCH TO CAPE

Transform your favourite cosy blanket into a chic, stylish cape with this quick and easy upcycle project by Debbie Wainhouse





HOW TO MAKE... A BLANKET CAPE

YOU WILL NEED

- Blanket: measuring at least 130x170cm (52x67in)
- Belt of your choice
- Buttonhole foot for your sewing machine
- Erasable fabric marker
- Matching thread
- Basic sewing kit

NOTES

- Seam allowance is 1cm (3/8in) unless otherwise stated

IDEAL FABRICS

- A close weave fabric is easier to work with as it won't unravel. Fleece, boiled wool or an acrylic blend blanket are ideal

CUTTING OUT

Step one Fold the blanket in half, the folded edge will be the top edge. Measure the halfway point of the blanket along the folded top edge and the bottom edge and mark with a pin. **01**

Step two Using an erasable fabric marker or chalk and a plate or circular item approximately 19cm (7 1/2in) in diameter, mark a half circle at the centre of the top of the blanket on the fold, this will become your neckline. **02**

Step three Cut a vertical line up from the bottom hem at the halfway point that you marked with a pin and then cut the half circle shape, leaving the back of the blanket uncut. This will create the shaped neckline. **03**

MAKING THE CAPE

Step one Hem from the bottom of the blanket all the way around by turning 1cm (3/8in) to the wrong side (WS). At this stage, you can use a decorative stitch or blanket stitch if you prefer. If your fabric looks like it might fray easily it would be advisable to finish the hem with a zigzag stitch or overlocker. **04**

Step two Try the blanket cape on and mark placement for two vertical buttonholes at your waist that will fit a belt that you own. Our measurements were 38cm (15in) down from the shoulder/top edge and 15cm (6in) in from the centre front on each side, and our chosen belt is 2cm (3/4in) wide. **05**

Step three Measure your belt width and pick a button that's a similar width to use in your buttonhole foot. Stitch the buttonholes using your buttonhole foot or work them by hand if your belt is very wide. Test your buttonhole on scrap fabric first as it may struggle with the thicker fabric depending on your machine.

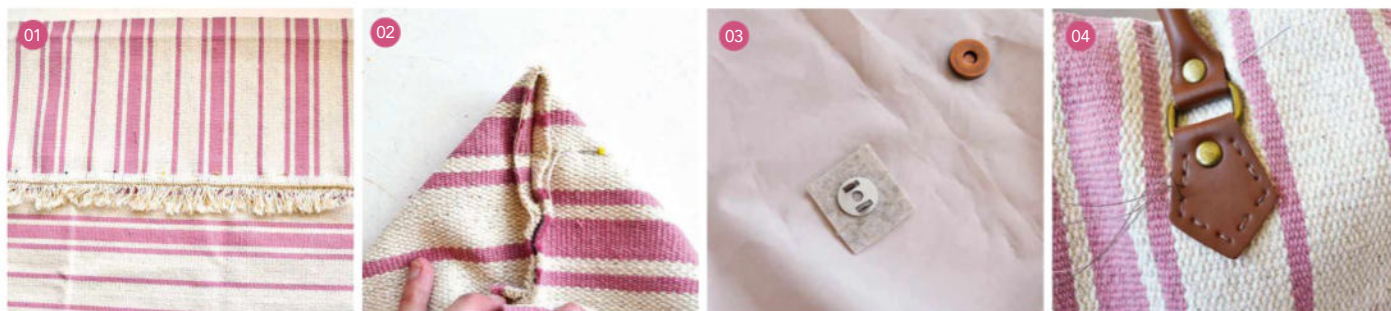
Step four To wear, simply thread the belt around your waist under the back of the blanket and then through the two new buttonholes on the front. **06**





fringe benefits

Upcycle two rugs into a bespoke summer bag with Anna Alicia's clever upcycling hack



HOW TO MAKE... A RUG BAG

YOU WILL NEED

- 2 rugs: at least 60x60cm (24x24in) each with a fringe at both ends
- Plain cotton fabric: 87x54cm (34 1/4x21 1/4in), for lining
- Magnetic clasp
- Felt: small scrap
- Pair of faux-leather handles
- Extra-strong upholstery thread: to match the handles
- Matching thread
- Basic sewing kit

NOTES

- Seam allowance is 1cm (3/8in) unless otherwise stated

CUTTING OUT

Step one The upper front and upper bag sections are cut from one rug with the fringe still attached. At one end of the rug, measure 28cm (11in) up from the top of the fringe and mark a line then cut along it. Trim this piece so that it is 54cm (21 1/4in) wide. This is the upper front section.

Step two Repeat this at the other end of the rug to cut the upper back section, again with the fringe still attached.

Step three From the other rug cut a rectangle 39cm (15 3/8in) high and 54cm (21 1/4in) wide so the stripes run across the width. This is the base piece of the bag.

MAKING THE BAG OUTER

Step one Lay the base piece right side (RS) up so the stripes run horizontally.

Step two Lay the upper front RS up on top of the base so the bottom edge of the fringe overlaps one long edge of the base piece by 1.5cm (5/8in).

Step three Pin in place just above the fringe. Look at the rug closely before you do this as there is a RS and wrong side (WS) to the fringe, so make sure you have the RS facing up. **01**

Step four Sew the upper front to the base just above the fringe.

Step five Lay this joined front and base piece flat out again and overlap, pin and sew the upper back section on the opposite side of the base in the same way.

Step six Fold the assembled bag outer in half with RS together, matching the top edges of the front and back pieces, and pin.

Step seven Now sew together down the sides.

BOXING THE CORNERS

Step one With the bag outer WS out, fold one bottom corner into a flat triangle with the side seam running directly towards you.

Step two Mark a point on the seam 4.5cm (1 7/8in) from the tip of the triangle and draw a line across at a right angle to this, then pin all the way along it. **02**

Step three Sew along this line then trim the fabric 1cm (3/8in) outside the stitching.

Step four Repeat this to box the opposite bottom corner of the bag outer too.

Step five Turn the bag outer RS out.

MAKING THE LINING

Step one Fold the lining fabric in half widthways with RS facing and then securely stitch together down both sides.

Step two Box both of the bottom corners in the same way as for the bag outer.

Step three Turn the top edge of the lining under by 1.5cm (5/8in) and press in place.

ADDING THE CLASP

Step one Mark centrally and 4cm (1 5/8in) down from the top edge on the WS of each lining piece of fabric.

Step two Take the washer part of the clasp and line this up over one of the dots then mark the two slits with a pen.

Step three Pinch the fabric and carefully snip these slits with a small pair of scissors.

Step four From the RS of the lining, push the prongs of the first half of the clasp through the two slits. Add a scrap of wadding, interfacing or felt over the prongs for reinforcement, then the washer,

and then bend the prongs out to secure.

Step five Repeat this to attach the other half of the clasp on the other lining piece in the same position so they will match up. **03**

ATTACHING THE HANDLES

Step one Turn the top edge of the outer under by 3cm (1 1/4in) all the way around and press.

Step two Position one of the handles centrally on one side of the bag outer so that the top of the sew-on section is 5cm (2in) from the top turned-under edge of the bag – you can alter this measurement so your chosen handles hang properly on the bag.

Step three Hold the handles in place with a couple of pins through the punched holes.

Step four Thread a sturdy needle with upholstery thread, double it and tie a knot at the end. Sew the handles in place with a running stitch through the pre-punched holes in the handle. **04**

Step five Repeat on the other side of the bag with the other handle.

ATTACHING THE LINING

Step one Put the lining into the outer bag so they are WS together and so the top edge of the lining sits 1cm (3/8in) below the top folded-under edge of the outer.

Step two To finish, slip stitch the turned-under edge of the lining to the folded-over edge of the outer. Be sure to make sure your stitches don't show through on the front.

QUICK FIX

Sew a planter that perfectly matches your home décor
with this fabric plant pot from Anna Alicia



YOU WILL NEED

- Plain canvas: 90x110cm (36x44in)
- Print canvas: 53x107cm (207/8x42½in)
- Cord, 12mm (½in): 130cm (51in)
- Eyelets and tool: four, 14mm (⅝in)
- Basic sewing kit

NOTES

- Use a 1.5cm (⅝in) seam allowance

MAKING A TEMPLATE

Step one Draw a 33cm (13in) diameter circle and cut out.

Step two From the plain canvas cut:

Lining: 53x107cm (207/8x42½in)

Outer and Lining Base: two using your template.

ATTACHING THE BASE

Step one Fold the print canvas fabric in half widthways with right sides (RS) facing and pin.

Step two Sew the short ends together.

Step three Open to form a tube. Pin then stitch the Outer Base around one end, RS together. Repeat with the Lining and Lining Base.

JOINING THE OUTER AND LINING

Step one Turn the Lining RS out and slip the outer inside so wrong sides (WS) are facing. Now fold under both top edges by 1.5cm (⅝in) and pin.

Step two Topstitch around the top edge.

Step three Fold over the top of the assembled planter by 18cm (7in).

ATTACHING EYELETS

Step one Flatten the planter with the seam to one side. Measure 9cm (3⅝in) from the top, then measure 17cm (6¾in) from the right edge and mark where the two points meet.

Step two Measure and mark points the same distances down from the top and from the left edge. Turn the planter over and repeat on the other side.

Step three Add an eyelet at each of the marked points. Make sure the RS of the eyelet is on the outside, and you only go through the turned-over edge of the planter.

ADDING THE HANDLES

Step one Cut the cord in half. Tie a knot in one end of each piece and thread this through the eyelet (from the inside), using the image as a guide. Thread it back through the other eyelet and tie in a knot. Repeat on the other side.

great

Home Comforts

Use colourful printed cottons to make mood-boosting appliqué cushions by Jessica Entwistle





HOW TO MAKE... APPLIQUÉ CUSHIONS

YOU WILL NEED

For each cushion:

- Fabric A: 30x30cm
– appliqué
- Fabric B: 42x42cm
– background
- Fabric C: 42x60cm
– envelope back
- Bondaweb: 30x30cm
- Vlieseline Thermolam:
42x42cm
- Cushion pad: 45cm
square
- Erasable fabric marker
- Basic sewing kit

NOTES

- Use a 1cm seam allowance
- Use a walking foot if you have one
- Find the templates on page 42

CUTTING OUT

Step one Download and print the template. Create a mirror image by holding the template up to a light source and drawing over the outline of the letters on the reverse side of the paper.

Step two Trace the letters onto the paper side of the Bondaweb. Press the Bondaweb to the wrong side (WS) of the Fabric A appliqué fabric and cut out the letters.

Step three From fabric C cut: Envelope Back: two 42x30cm

ADDING THE APPLIQUÉ

Step one Transfer the template onto the right side (RS) of the background fabric using the erasable fabric marker. Our text is central to the fabric. **01**

Step two Peel off the backing paper from the Bondawebbed fabric and press the letters onto the background fabric.

Step three Topstitch around the outer edges of the appliqué letters.

Step four Place the appliquéd front right side (RS) up on top of the Thermolam, all sides aligned. Stay stitch together all the way around. **02**

ADDING THE ENVELOPE BACKING

Step one Take one of the Envelope Back fabrics and fold over the top 30cm edge to the wrong side (WS) by 1cm, press. Fold over again by 1cm and press again. Topstitch down. Repeat steps with the second Envelope Back, but this time with the bottom 30cm edge. **03**

Step two Place the top Envelope Back RS together on top of the cushion front, aligning raw edges. Then place the second Envelope Back RS together on top, aligning the raw edges. Pin/clip together to hold all the way around. **04**

Step three Sew together all the way around with a 1cm seam allowance. Trim off excess fabric/Thermolam, clip corners and zigzag around the raw edges to neaten if you wish.

Step four Turn RS out through the Envelope Back, push out all corners and seams and press. Insert the cushion pad to finish.

QUICK FIX

Debbie Wainhouse's super-quick knotted hairband is the stash-busting way to easily accessorise any outfit

MAKE IN
1 HOUR!



YOU WILL NEED

- Cotton fabric: 53x18cm (21x7in)
- Hot glue gun or fabric glue
- Plain hairband
- Matching thread
- Basic sewing kit

NOTES

- Seam allowance is 1cm ($\frac{3}{8}$ in) unless otherwise stated
- We based our fabric measurements on the width of our headband

CUTTING OUT

Step one From the cotton fabric cut:
Hairband Strip: 53x18cm (21x7in)

SEWING THE HAIRBAND STRIP

Step one Fold the Hairband Strip in half, bringing the long edges together with right sides (RS) facing together and pin along the long edge.

Step two Sew along the long edge leaving a turning gap of 5cm (2in) in the middle. Backstitch either side of the turning gap so that the stitches don't rip out when you turn the strip through to the RS.

Step three Press the strip so the seam is in the centre, then sew along the short ends.

Step four Turn the headband strip RS out through the turning gap and press well so that the seam is in the centre.

ASSEMBLING THE HAIRBAND

Step one Place the hairband in the centre of the fabric strip with the seam against the inside of the hairband.

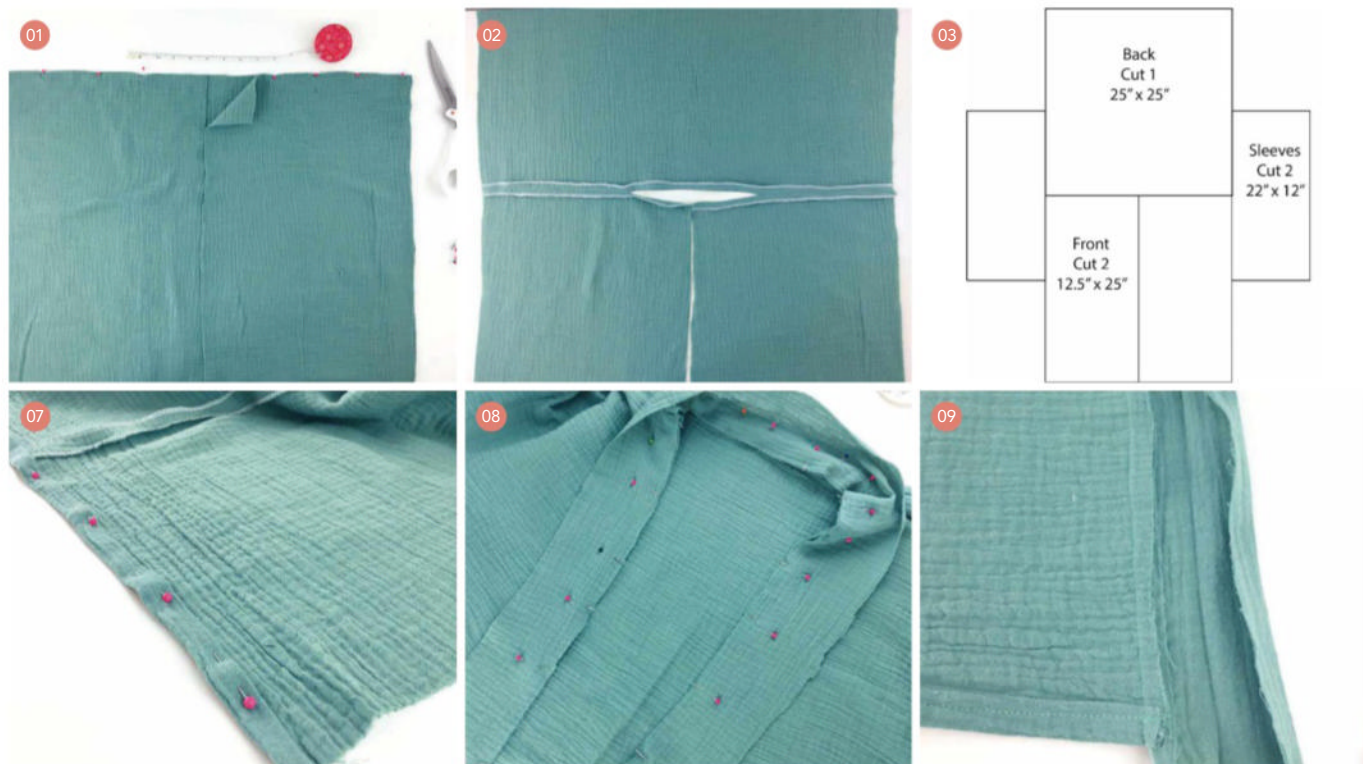
Step two Tie the fabric in a knot. Arrange the knot so you are happy with it and that it is nice and centred making sure the rest of the fabric reaches the ends of the hairband.

Step three Fold the bottom corners in and hot glue them to the inside of the hairband. Start by folding one side in and then fold the other side on top to finish.

A woman with dark curly hair is posing against a light beige background. She is wearing a green, short-sleeved, open-front poncho over a white t-shirt with a decorative neckline. She is also wearing blue jeans. Her hands are clasped in front of her.

Summer nights

Grab a drapey fabric and sew yourself a lightweight cover-up for the warmer evenings with this project from Debbie Wainhouse



HOW TO MAKE... DRAPE CARDIGAN

YOU WILL NEED

- Cotton Gauze or any fabric with a nice drape: 1.5m (1¾yd)
- Matching thread
- Basic sewing kit

NOTES

- Seam allowance is 1.5cm (¾in) unless otherwise stated.
- The measurements shown will fit a UK size 10-12; increase the panel sizes to enlarge
- If you are unsure about your size, use a garment you already own such as a jacket or t-shirt to calculate approximate measurements

CUTTING OUT

Step one From the main fabric cut:
Back: 64x64cm (25x25in)
Front: two 32x64cm (12.5x25in)
Sleeve: two 56x30cm (22x12in)

ASSEMBLING THE JACKET

Step one Place each Front on top of the Back right sides (RS) facing and pin along the top edges leaving a gap of 10cm (4in) either side of the front opening and sew. **01**
Step two Finish the edges with your overlocker or with a zigzag stitch. **02**
Step three Lay out the assembled Back and Front RS facing up. Find the horizontal centre of the Sleeve rectangle, then pin that centre to the shoulder seam RS together. Sew. **03**
Step four Fold the jacket, RS together, in half along the shoulder seams. Pin and sew the bottom of the sleeves and the sides of the garment. Finish all seams with an overlocker or zigzag if your fabric is likely to fray. **04**
Step five Fold the front edge in from the side of the neck opening to centre front on both sides, then trim these pieces off. **05**
Step six Hem the sleeves. Fold over approximately 5mm (¼in) and then a further 5mm (¼in), pin and sew. **06**

Step seven Hem the bottom of the jacket. Fold over approximately 5mm (¼in) and then again, pin and sew. **07**

ADDING THE PLACKET BAND

Step one Cut a 7.5cm (3in) wide strip (on the straight of grain) as long as the length of the opening is of the front of the jacket which should be approximately 152cm (60in). We made our strip a bit longer and trimmed off the excess later on). This will be attached to make the front opening trim. You can make this strip wider if you would like a thicker band.
Step two Pin this strip RS together along the opening edge of the jacket front from the bottom all the way around the neck and back down. Stitch. **08**
Step three Press a 1cm (¾in) hem on the unsewn edge of the facing. This will help to align it with the already sewn seam. **09**
Step four Fold the strip in half, lining up the folded edge of the pressed edge with the inside seam. Press again and pin in place. **10**
Step five To finish the facing ends, pin the facing back onto itself with RS together.
Step six Stitch across the bottom

matching your stitching line with the bottom of the hem of the jacket. Then turn back to the RS and you'll have a neat hem. **11**

Step seven Topstitch the facing in place all the way around the neckline and the front of the jacket using a slightly longer stitch length (we used 2.8).

Step eight Give the jacket a final press on the WS to finish. **12**



TOP TIPS

1 Lengthen the jacket to make a longer length cover-up for cooler evenings.

2 Add a trim to the hem and sleeve hems, you can personalise the style to your taste. Use tassels for a holiday cover-up or pom-pom trim for party wear.

3 Add patch pockets to the front of the garment. Try the jacket on when complete and decide where you would like to place them.

4 Dip the hem at the back for a subtle design detail. You could choose to curve the back hem or simply cut the back a few cm longer and turn the side seams in.

5 Use a lightweight gauze as we have for summer or make this in a denim or lightweight wool depending on the season.

6 Make a tie belt from leftover fabric to take in the waist; you could also add belt loops at the side seams to hold the belt.





A VIRTUAL CONNECTION

There are so many ways to get involved
with the wonderfully warm and
welcoming online sewing community

By Caroline Akselson

@ninetostitch



@susanyoungsewing



@kateevadesigns



@purplesewingcloud



@thefoldline



@newcrafthouse





(Left to right) Samantha, Esther and Susan all have different ways of making the most of the online community.

Sewing and crafting is hot online: it's a whole new world for makers joining the online sewing realm, and an ever-evolving but steady club for more seasoned members of the crafty community.

Many makers go online to be inspired by what other people are sewing and equally to ask for advice or support. When Samantha from @purplesewingcloud started sharing online, she remembers she was worried that people would criticise her sewing techniques, but now she is an established member of the sewing community, sharing her makes and her experience of sewing with disabilities: "[Online] I often find new tools or techniques that help me sew with my health; I find it's the most important thing I share."

A common side effect of sharing sewing online is making new connections and discovering smaller communities within the community. A few years ago, Esther (@ninetostitch) started sharing her makes on Instagram, "I [go online] to search for inspiration, to assist with fit issues and just generally have a group of people that understand terminologies like swayback adjustments and FBA, which none of my friends understand!". There is room for everyone and many an online friendship is formed over a shared love of a certain style, colour or sewing challenge.

It's inspiring to see skilled makers share their incredible clothes, but sharing mistakes, adjustments and problems is also a popular way to talk about dressmaking online. Sue from @susanyoungsewing has been sewing for decades and purposefully shares her mistakes online "because it's important people don't just see the 'perfect' Insta snapshot when things go exactly to plan."

There is also room for activism, criticism

"sewing my own clothes was just the catalyst for deeper conversations."

and reflection, as individual makers can use their online platforms and their craft however they want and share it with the world. All of this makes the online sewing community a space where makers can get uniquely personal with their sewing. Sue says that sharing via Instagram has "even enabled me to have a greater understanding of issues affecting people's everyday lives in a way that simply reading the papers or watching TV doesn't. Sewing my own clothes was just the catalyst for

deeper conversations."

Perhaps you want to get involved with sewing online but don't know where to start? Or you are looking for something to get more stuck into with sewing and dressmaking. Let's look at some ways you can join the online sewing community and how makers and brands are sharing their love for sewing in an online space.

LEADING THE WAY

Inspiration is perhaps one of the biggest reasons to join the online sewing community, as there is just so much of it. Social media platforms are the perfect place to share photos of clothes you've made, ideas you have or fabrics that are waiting for the perfect pattern. Kate started documenting the clothes she made via Instagram (@kateevadesigns) and her blog a few years ago, and she enjoys using her platform to share ideas and her experiences.

Fabrics are also a source of motivation, and a few brands are showcasing the popularity of certain fabric through the use of 'fabric ambassadors': makers who show off what they have made with a certain



(Above) Naomi (@whatnaomimade) and Nerrissa (@nerrisapratt) are both fabric ambassadors for Fabric Godmother's own fabric range.

fabric, giving us ideas for which fabrics to combine with what patterns. Rosie and Hannah from The New Craft House (thenewcrafthouse.com), one of the brands using fabric ambassadors on online platforms, find that "People love to see how a fabric looks sewn up; it's hard to envisage a garment made out of a roll of it!"

Fabric Godmother (fabricgodmother.co.uk) is another online fabric store which uses ambassadors to help inspire shoppers. Josie Hawes, founder and owner, enjoys seeing what ambassadors make with her fabrics as they all have such a unique perspective on what to make with them. She observes that more people have started shopping for fabrics online in the past two years, which allows customers to discover a wider range of fabrics than they would be able to choose from in a shop. Fabric ambassadors certainly help spread the fabric love online and sometimes fabrics sell out quickly purely due to their popularity online.

Sewing and craft hub Minerva (minerva.com) is another company with ambassadors spreading the sewing love online. Their global brand ambassadors share their makes using fabrics, patterns or kits by

Minerva, creating an online catalogue of different ways to create with the same starting point. They work with a wide range of makers from different backgrounds and skill levels to ensure everyone who visits the website can see themselves represented.

Sewing machine brands also often use ambassadors in a similar way by sponsoring machines to brands or individual makers. This way we get a glimpse into new sewing machine techniques and you can pick up a new skill by just browsing. You can typically search for machine ambassadors by looking for a hashtag with the machine's brand and add the word 'ambassador'.

INSPIRING MAKERS

Social media platforms like Instagram have become full of home sewists (hobbyists and pros alike) sharing their love for sewing and fabrics, sharing their sewing journey and their makes with their followers. Their accounts are like a visual diary of their projects and if you're struggling with your sewjo, browsing your feed can often be a great way to kick-start it again! If you love the style of a particular brand, following the designer behind their patterns can also feed

FOUR WAYS TO GET STARTED ONLINE

Free, simple and easy ways to make the most of your time spent online

- 1 **BROWSE HASHTAGS**
See a pattern you like? Follow the pattern's hashtag to see what other makers are doing with the pattern and get inspired.
- 2 **CHALLENGE YOURSELF**
Join in with a sewing community challenge like #MeMadeMay and chat and share with other makers.
- 3 **JOIN SEWALONGS**
Join a free online sewalong, hosted by a pattern designer or a brand. Sew Over It and Tilly and the Buttons run lots of these.
- 4 **WEEKLY READ**
Follow The Fold Line's blog for pattern releases and sewing chat, including tips to recreate TV and high-street looks.

your imagination. We particularly love Maddie from underwear brand Madalynne Intimates' account (@mmadalynne) as well as By Hand London's Elisalex (@elisalex) and Mimi G from Mimi G Style (@mimigstyle).

The Fold Line's weekly blog, The Sew Reporter (thefoldline.com) is a brilliant way to get discover what people have been making online without endless browsing.

JOIN THE CLUB

If you are ready to get more involved and perhaps commit to learning new techniques, or you simply want to meet like-minded creatives online, there are clubs, groups and memberships you can join. The Fold Line

FABULOUS FEEDS TO FOLLOW

Accounts to celebrate and connect with like-minded makers



@SewQueer

A place to meet and share with queer sewists, founded by @rare.device.



@blkmakersmatter

A space for Black sewists and crafters to unite, founded by @thatssewmonica.



@ChronicallySewn

A space for chronically ill sewists, founded by @andiewellsstudio.



@AsianSewistCollective

A podcast and blog co-founded by @i.hope.sew and @nicoleangelinesews.



@CurvySewingCollective

A body-positive platform for curvy sewists by @idlefancy and @cashmerette.



@SewOver50

A community for sewists over 50, founded by @judithrosalind.



(Above) Online memberships, such as The Table from Selkie Patterns, offer a dedicated platform and community with access to exclusive tutorials, advice and products.

has a popular Facebook group where founders Kate and Rachel share sewing inspiration with nearly 15,000 members. The members are an active bunch, sharing anything from advice on techniques, patterns, fitting and even what to watch on TV whilst sewing!

If you're looking for a membership to learn more skills and take your sewing up a notch, there are several brands that offer these online, too. Sew

Over It has a membership called Stitch School (sewoverit.com) with different tiers to suit your commitment. The classes range from short techniques to complete

sewalongs for a specific pattern. The Thrifty Stitcher is another online membership (thrifystitcher.co.uk), teaching skills rather than projects and offering tiers of membership as well as classes. London brand All-in Patterns (selkiepatterns.co.uk) has an all-in online membership called The Table, catering to people who want to learn more sewing techniques (from beginner to pro) as well as offering the opportunity to hear from pro creatives in interviews and online meets.

If you're wanting to learn more but don't want a monthly commitment, there are brands offering online classes and one-off webinars too. Look at By Hand London (byhandlondon.com) and Alice & Co Patterns (aliceandcopatterns.com) for these.

For a completely immersive sewing experience, The Fold Line now run their Sewing Weekender festival online. Previously a weekend event hosted in a UK city, this is now an online festival with lots of talks and workshops to get stuck into.

This year's event is happening on the 21–22 May and has an array of workshops on offer and speakers from all over the world.

EASY WAYS TO GET INVOLVED

Perhaps you don't just want to browse, but you're not interested in committing to a class or membership: you want to join in on the community fun, regardless of your sewing level, and in a way that suits you. Instagram is great for this as brands and individuals alike run community competitions

or challenges that all can join!

CHALLENGES

The sewing community loves an online challenge: a way to push yourself a little bit to learn something new, complete a project, or even win a prize. The biggest community challenge that happens every year is Me Made May (#MeMadeMay), an online challenge to wear a homemade garment for every day of the month of May. This has grown hugely popular and you can join in whichever way you like. Kate has joined for four years now and says it gives her a push to wear more of her wardrobe:

"I find that I can slip into the habit of wearing the same dress again and again, so I see Me Made May as a challenge to wear something different every day and embrace my

lesser-worn makes." Esther also enjoys this creative month: "My favourite part is all the new sewists and sewing patterns I get to discover during the month-long challenge." Even if you don't actively take part, following along with perhaps the most popular online sewing challenge is guaranteed to spark some creativity.

Meet the Maker (#MarchMeetTheMaker) is another fun challenge, if you want to discover more about your favourite brands or perhaps want to share about your own makes. The New Craft House have run #SewYourselfSustainable for the past few years, a great challenge to be a bit more mindful with your wardrobe.

For a full list of online sewing challenges, visit the 'Favourites' section on @SewOver50; a good place to start!

HASHTAGS

Hashtags are another quick and easy way of finding like-minded makers online. There are so many of these available to help you find a new community, including hashtags

FOLLOW AND ENJOY

A small sample of hashtags to add plenty of sewing goodness to your feed

General dressmaking

#IMakeMyOwnClothes
#MeMade
#MeMadeEveryDay
#HandmadeWardrobe
#SewistsOfInstagram

Size

#CurvySewing
#PetiteSewing
#PlusSizeSewing
#FatSewingClub

Disability

#SewnShownSeated
#ChronicallySewn
#SewingDisabled

Diversity

#SewInColour
#POCWhoSews
#InclusiveMaker
#SewOver50
#MenWhoSew

Sustainability

#SustainableSewing
#EthicalSewing
#UpcycledSewing



for the plus-size sewing community, men who sew, makers of colour, or makers with disabilities. The benefits of finding these specific pockets within the wider community can make a big difference to your sewing experience, as Samantha explains about the community of disabled makers: "It's wonderful to have people that understand your difficulties on a level other people might not, and share tips and tricks on how to overcome sewing problems that people without disabilities won't encounter."

Sue started her online journey searching for hashtags like #IMakeMyOwnClothes on Instagram to see who else was 'out there' seven years ago, proving that hashtags can lead you to accounts that you would have no other way of finding. Kate also uses hashtags to seek sewing inspiration: "I love browsing hashtags to see how other people have used a pattern that I'm about to sew."

Start your journey with one of our sister brands @SimplySewingMag and share your makes using #SimplySewingMag.

QUICK FIX

Add a touch of vintage charm to a wedding, party or room with ditsy floral bunting. Blooming lovely!

YOU WILL NEED

- Cotton fabric: 25x40cm (10x16in) for each flag
- 2.5cm (1in) wide cotton tape
- Basic sewing kit

NOTES

- Use a 1cm ($\frac{3}{8}$ in) seam allowance

CALCULATING THE FABRIC

Step one The finished flags are 15cm (6in) wide with a gap of 10cm (4in) between them. So, divide the length you want your finished bunting to be by 25cm (10in) to work out how many flags you need to make.

Step two Buy cotton tape to the length of your finished bunting plus about 30cm (12in) extra at either end for hanging it up.

CUTTING OUT

Step one Cut around the bunting flag template.

Step two Cut the fabric in half then place the two pieces right sides (RS) together with the template pinned centrally on top.

Step three Cut around the template then pin the two triangles of fabric together.

STITCHING THE FLAGS

Step one Stitch the two triangles together, but leave the top straight edge open.

Step two Trim the seams at the lower edge and bottom point to help the flag lay flat.

Step three Turn the triangles RS out and press flat. Repeat this process to make as many other flags as you need for your length of bunting.

ASSEMBLING THE BUNTING

Step one Fold and press the cotton tape in half lengthways with wrong sides (WS) together.

Step two Pin one flag inside the tape up to the fold, leaving some tape at the end for hanging.

Step three Pin the rest of the flags inside the tape, positioning them 10cm (4in) apart.

Step four Topstitch along the the tape to keep it folded and hold the flags securely in place.

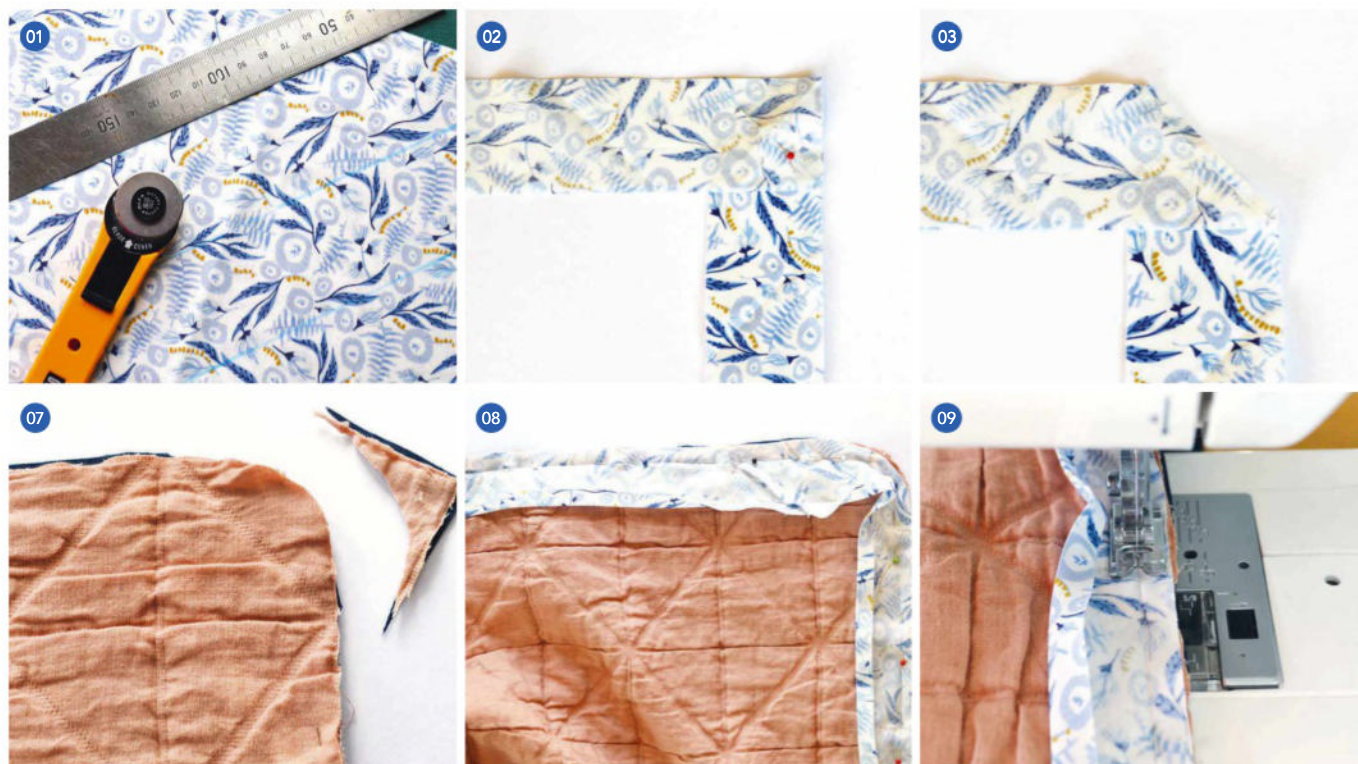


SEW YOUR
OWN IN AN
AFTERNOON!

FINISHED BY HAND

Made in pre-quilted cotton and
finished with hand-tied stitching, sew
Anna Alicia's quilt in record time





HOW TO MAKE... PRE-QUILTED BLANKET

YOU WILL NEED

- Patterned quilting cotton fabric: 50x115cm (20x45in), for binding
- Pre-quilted cotton fabric: 1.5mx115cm (1¾ydx45in)
- Cotton fabric: 1.5mx115cm (13/4ydx45in), for backing
- Bright cotton yarn
- Set square
- Cutting mat
- Rotary cutter
- Bias binding maker: 2.5cm (1in)
- Large needle
- Matching thread
- Basic sewing kit

NOTES

- Use a 1cm (¾in) seam allowance unless otherwise stated
- If using the pre-quilted fabric, make sure your backing fabric is at least 120cm (47in) wide so you can use its full width

MAKING THE BIAS BINDING

Step one Lay out the patterned quilting cotton wrong side (WS) up on your work surface. Use a set square and tailor's chalk to mark a line from one long edge of the fabric to the other at a 45-degree angle. Working out from that first line in either direction, mark another line 4.8cm (1¾in) from the first, still at a 45-degree angle. Continue marking lines at 4.8cm (1¾in) intervals all the way across the fabric either side of the first line. Place the fabric on the cutting mat and use the rotary cutter to cut along the lines, cutting the fabric into 4.8cm (1¾in) strips. **01**

Step two Take two of the strips (you probably won't need to use the very smallest strips, so leave those for now) and square off the ends. Lay one strip out vertically, right side (RS) up. At the top edge of that strip, lay the other strip on top, face-down, at a right angle to the first. Mark a line at 45-degrees across the square formed where the two strips overlap, from the outer edge of the top strip to the outer edge of the other strip. Pin along that line. **02**

Step three Sew along the marked line then trim away the corner roughly

2-3mm (¼in) from the seam. Unfold along the seam and press. The two pieces should now be one straight strip. Continue adding strips in this way until you have a strip at least 5.5m (6yd) long. **03**

Step four With the strip WS down, feed one end into a bias binding maker (it should come with a pointy tool to help you do this). Slowly pull the bias binding maker along the strip and press the folded bias tape with a hot iron as you go. Set the bias binding aside for now. **04**

PREPARING THE QUILT

Step one Trim away the selvedge from the pre-quilted fabric. **05**

Step two Lay out the backing fabric RS down and lay the pre-quilted fabric on top, RS up. Pin together along the edges of the pre-quilted fabric and trim away excess backing fabric. **06**

Step three Trim each corner into a curve, starting and ending roughly 6cm (2¾in) along the edges. **07**

Step four We attached the bias binding by machine to the front of the quilt and then finished it by hand on the back to give a neat look. Lay out the quilt RS up, then unfold one edge of the bias binding and pin that

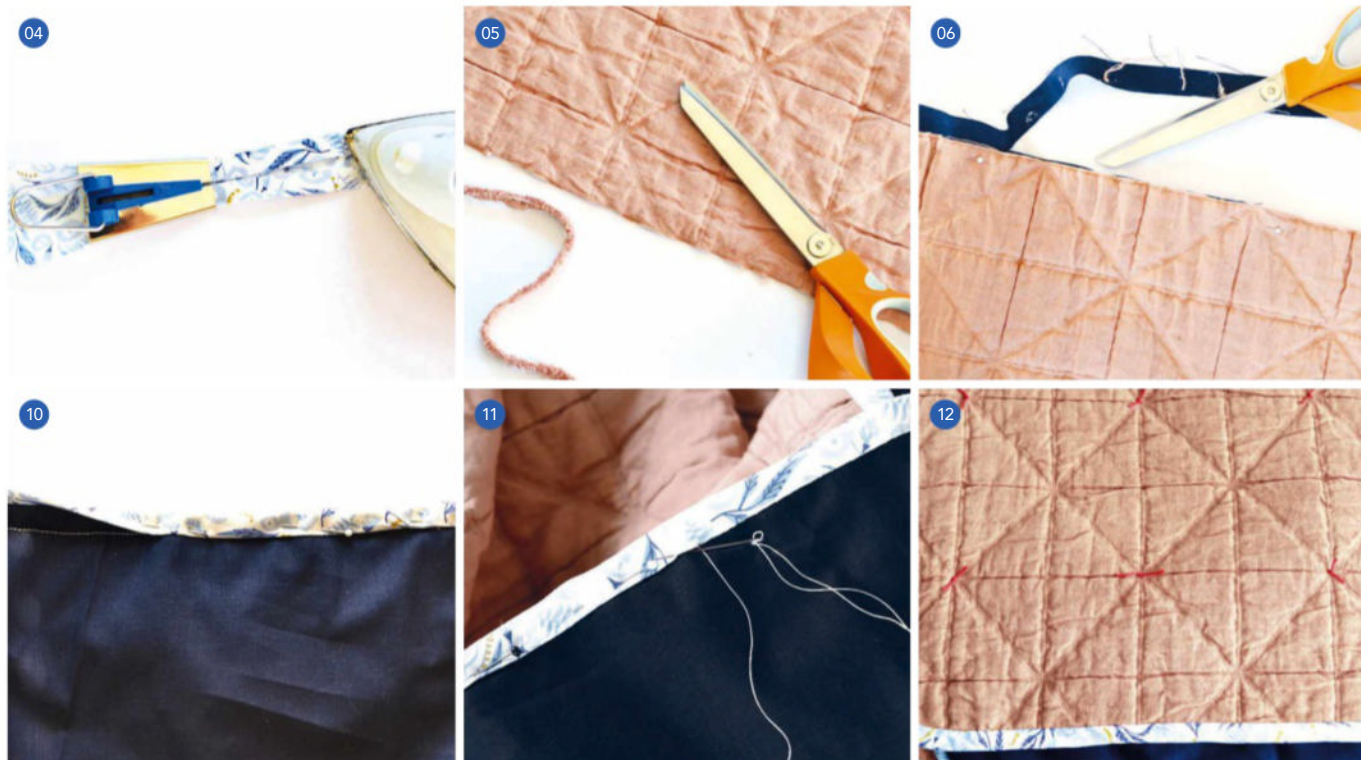
unfolded edge RS down along the edges of the quilt. The outer edge of the bias binding should line up with the edge of the quilt and the pins should be placed along the crease where you unfolded the binding. Curve the binding around the corners, following the curves. When you reach the point where you started, fold one end of the bias binding over by 1cm (¾in) and then overlap the other end on top of that by 1cm (¾in). **08**

Step five Sew the binding in place along the crease, where you have pinned, all the way around the edge of the quilt. **09**

Step six Re-fold the binding along the original crease where you have stitched.

Step seven Turn the quilt over and fold the binding over onto the back, pinning in place as you go. The binding should just cover the stitching that will be visible on the back. **10**

Step eight Use a slipstitch to neatly sew the binding in place all along the back of the quilt piece.. Be careful to make sure that your slip stitches are not visible on the front, especially if they are in a contrast thread. **11**



FINISHING OFF

Step one final step is to 'tie' the quilt with hand-stitching. This keeps the backing and front layers together instead of sewing traditional quilted lines. Depending on the pre-quilted fabric design, you can decide how you would like to place the ties. Ours are spaced quite broadly following the quilted fabric.

Step two Using a large needle threaded with a length of yarn and stitching from the front through to the back of the quilt, make a small stitch, around 4mm (1/4in) long, and bring the yarn back through to the front.

Step three Tie a double knot with the two yarn ends then trim the yarn so that 1-1.5cm (3/8-5/16in) of yarn still remains.

Step four Continue threading and tying yarn in equally spaced positions in your chosen pattern over the whole of the quilt. **12**



Lucky Star

Jennie Jones upgrades a favourite striped tee with a simple-sew lace panel. Make your own in an hour!





HOW TO MAKE... T-SHIRT PANEL

YOU WILL NEED

- 1 T-shirt
- Scrap piece of lace
- Bondaweb
- Basic sewing kit

CUTTING OUT

Designer Jennie says: "Stand out this summer with the ultimate festival-chic T-shirt. Zigzag stitching around the lace insert will strengthen it, but it will hold in place without sewing if you fancy a night off from your machine!"

MAKING A PATTERN

Step one Make a paper pattern of the shape and the size you'd like your insert panel to be. We have chosen a five-point star. Either draw a star template yourself, or search for a free template to download online. **01**

CUTTING OUT THE SHAPE

Step one Turn your T-shirt inside out and fold or measure to find the centre of the front or back depending on exactly where you want to place your insert.

Step two Pin your pattern to the T-shirt, taking care to keep the T-shirt flat beneath and around it for a neater finish. **02**

Step three Draw around your pattern using a fabric marker and cut your shape out carefully. The trick is to move

the T-shirt as little as possible to avoid fraying or rolling, so you may find it easier to carefully place a small cutting mat inside your T-shirt and cut out the shape using a rotary cutter.

ATTACHING THE LACE INSERT

Step one Cut 2cm ($\frac{3}{4}$ in) wide strips of Bondaweb and place them paper-side up around the edges of the cut-out shape on the inside of the T-shirt. Press into place.

Step two Cut a piece of lace 3cm ($1\frac{1}{4}$ in) bigger than your shape all the way around and place it right sides (RS) down on top of the inside of the T-shirt so it is centred over the cut-out shape. Press into place on a low heat, ensuring the steam setting is off to avoid melting the lace beneath. **03**

STITCHING THE LACE INSERT

Step one Turn the T-shirt right side out and press.

Step two Work a machine zigzag stitch on the T-shirt along the cut edges of the shape.

Step three Turn inside out. **04**

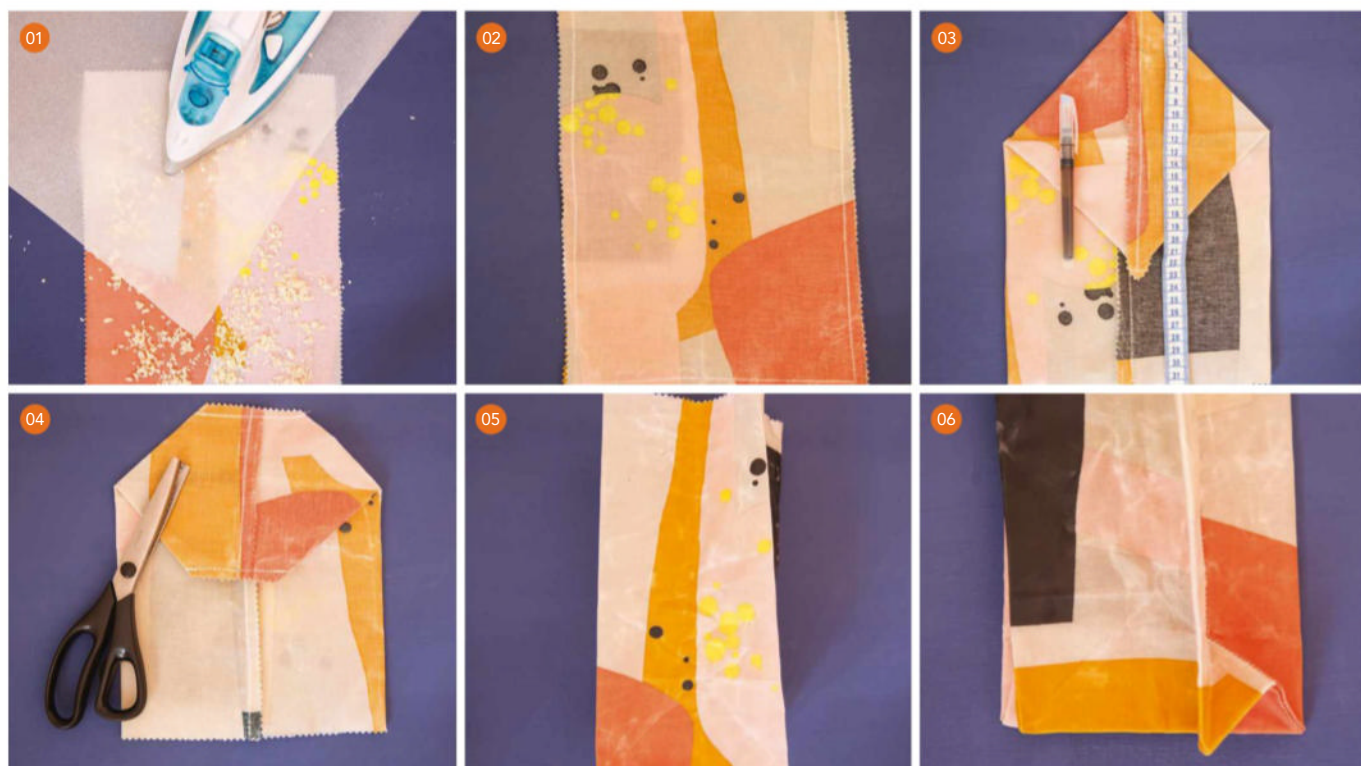
Step four Trim off excess lace 5mm ($\frac{1}{4}$ in) outside the zigzag stitching.



Waxing lyrical

Wrap picnics, lunches and leftovers the sustainable way with Juliet Bawden's waxed lunch bag. Make it from fabric offcuts for extra eco-friendly points!





HOW TO MAKE... LUNCH BAG

YOU WILL NEED

- Cotton fabric: two pieces measuring 33x24cm (13x10in), see notes for details.
- Beeswax block (or beeswax pellets)
- Cheese grater (if using a beeswax block)
- Baking parchment
- Pinking shears
- Paper clips (optional)
- Matching thread
- Basic sewing kit

NOTE

- If you choose to use a white fabric for this project the beeswax will give it a slight yellow tinge, so bear in mind when selecting fabrics

CUTTING OUT

Step one Using pinking shears, cut two pieces of fabric measuring 33x24cm (13x9½in) – this is a good size for a lunch bag, but you can adjust this to your preference.

BONDING THE BEESWAX TO THE COTTON FABRIC

Step one Using a medium-size hole on a cheese grater, grate some beeswax. The wax will wash off the grater afterwards using hot water and some dish washing detergent.

Step two Sprinkle the beeswax evenly over the fabric and then cover with baking parchment and run a hot iron over the parchment until the wax has melted into the cloth. Hang the fabric up to dry while you wax the other piece of fabric. If you are using your ironing board, put baking parchment under the fabric as well to prevent getting wax on it. **01**

MAKING THE BAG

Step one Once both pieces are dry, place them right sides (RS) facing and sew them together to form a bag. Sew along the two long sides and one short side. **02**

Step two Fold the edges to the centre to create a diamond shape on the bottom. **03**

Step three Mark 4.5cm (1⅞in) away from the points on either side and sew with a running stitch. Trim off the overlap. **04**

Step four Turn the bag RS out so that the seams are on the inside of the bag.

Step five Fold the front and back of the bag so that front and back of the bag are 15cm (6in) wide and the sides are 7cm (2¾in) wide.

Step six Flatten the bottom edges with a crisp fold and check that they are the same width as the bottom and side seams. **05**

Step seven Fold the base of the bag as shown to create a neat base so that the bag will stand on its own. **06**

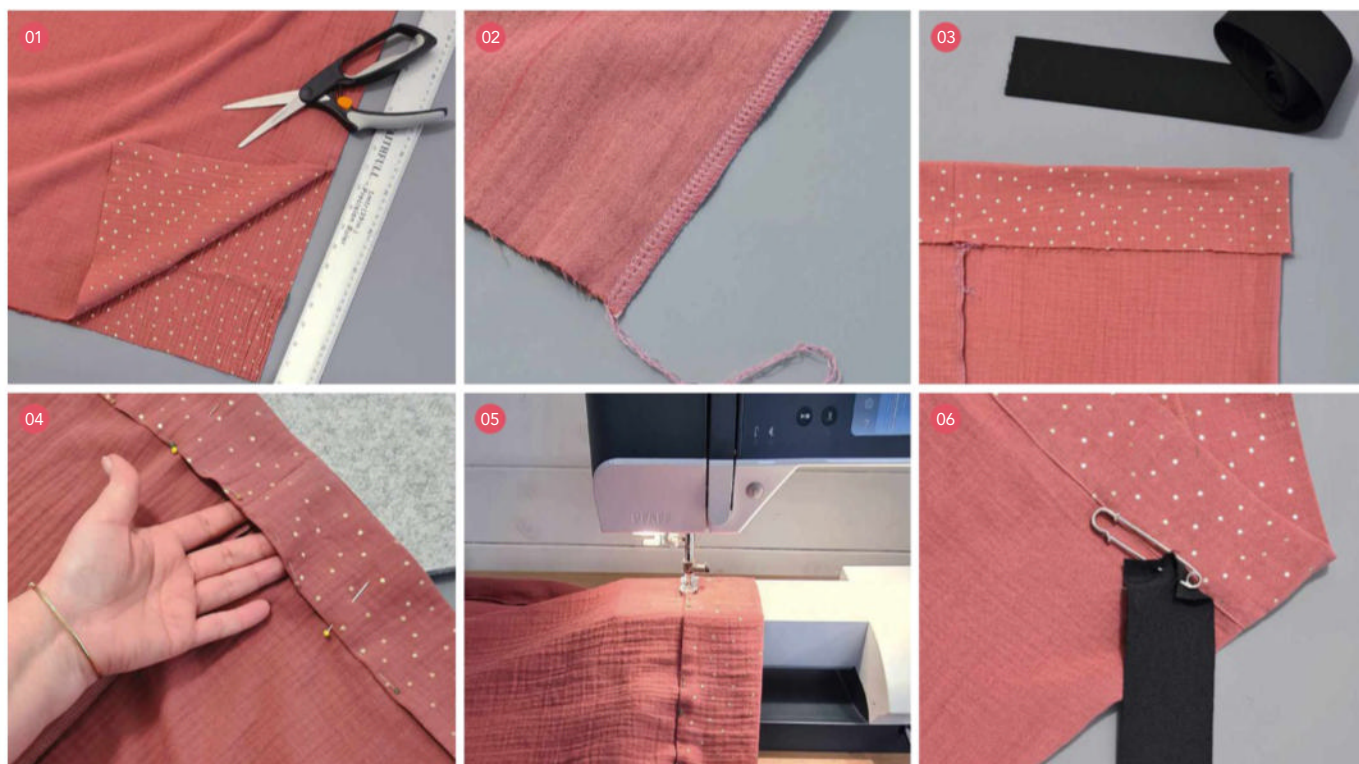
Step eight Line up the two top edges of the finished bag and fold over 2cm (¾in) and then again by 2cm (¾in) to close.





HOT OFF THE MACHINE

Made from just a rectangle of fabric and a piece of elastic, this patternless skirt how-to from Portia Lawrie is simple but oh-so effective



HOW TO MAKE... MIDI SKIRT

YOU WILL NEED

- Lightweight woven fabric: 1–2m
- Waistband elastic: your waist measurement + seam allowance

NOTES

- Seam allowance is 1cm ($\frac{3}{8}$ in) unless otherwise stated.
- Fabric quantity will depend on length
- Make a sample or a paper pattern before buying your fabric
- The basis of this skirt is essentially a tube of fabric. This can be comprised of a single very wide rectangle, folded and then joined with a single seam (as we have done), or two rectangles layered on top of one another and joined with side seams. Which you choose is dependent on your waist measurement, degree of gathering, and fabric width

This simple elasticated skirt is a great entry-level garment sewing project, but doesn't just hold appeal for beginners. Its simplicity makes it a great way to get a quick and easy sewing fix, even for more seasoned sewists. Using a statement fabric, such as a foil-detail double gauze (like we have used), will instantly elevate it into a wardrobe favourite.

CUTTING OUT

Step one Cut your rectangle(s) where the total width is 1.5–2 times your waist measurement + seam allowance, and the length is, waist to hem, what you want your finished skirt to be + hemming allowance + waistband allowance. Waistband allowance is an additional 1 x width of your elastic + 1.5cm ($\frac{5}{8}$ in) for turning). **01**

MAKING THE SKIRT

Step one Sew the side(s) of your rectangle(s) together to create a big fabric tube. **02**

Step two Along the top edge, fold over a waistband casing that is as deep as your elastic + 1.5cm ($\frac{5}{8}$ in). **03**

Step three Press under a 1cm ($\frac{3}{8}$ in)

hem along the raw edge of the waistband casing and pin in place. Mark a gap on the centre back about the width of your hand, that will remain unsewn to allow for insertion of elastic. **04**

Step four Edge stitch along the folded edge of your waistband casing, backstitching either side of the gap you marked. **05**

INSERTING THE ELASTIC

Step one Wrap your elastic around your waist and mark where it will need to be joined to fit comfortably. Remember that the elastic will need to be able to slide easily over your hips as well. Attach a safety pin/bodkin to one end of your elastic. **06**

Step two Insert the bodkin into the opening you left in the waistband casing. **07**

Step three Taking care not to twist the elastic, start feeding the bodkin and elastic through the waistband casing, rucking the casing up along the elastic as you go. **08**

Step four Keep going until the bodkin emerges back out at the opening where you started. Take care not to lose the other end in the process. **09**



HOW TO MAKE... MIDI SKIRT

Step five Cut along the marks on the elastic you made earlier and join the elastic together. We used a 'butt join' where the raw ends butt up against each other and are joined with a back and forth zigzag stitch as pictured. This eliminates the bulk you get with an overlap join and is just as secure. **10**

FINISHING

Step one Distribute the waistband casing evenly along the elastic and stitch closed the gap you left for inserting the elastic. **11**

Step two Finish the raw edge of your hem, and hem the bottom with the hemming allowance you added at the start. **12**

MORE IDEAS TO TRY

1 Add in-seam pockets to the skirt side seams by cutting four rectangles of your fabric approximately 20x25cm (8x10in) WxH. Finish all raw edges, then sew two rectangles RS together leaving a 15cm (6in) gap at the top of one of the 25cm (10in) sides. The pockets will need to sit in the side seams and the top edge of the pocket will need to be tucked under the 1cm ($\frac{3}{8}$ in) folded edge of the waistband casing (at the front of the skirt). Measure everything twice and pin the pockets in place first to check positioning. Alter the size of the rectangles to suit your hands and desired pocket depth. Remember not to sew

the pockets shut when you sew the side seams; instead backstitch at each side of the opening.

2 Experiment with different lengths or with an asymmetrical hem, dipping the back hem slightly. Be aware that sewing a curved hem will be trickier than a straight hem – always press under the hem allowance first for a neat finish.

3 Refashion a dress into a skirt. Cut off the bodice and add a waistband to the top edge of the skirt piece. This is a great way to increase the lifespan of your clothes!

Neat Idea

Tame the clutter with Anna Alicia's
easy-to-sew fabric baskets





HOW TO MAKE... FABRIC BASKETS

YOU WILL NEED

- 1.5m (59 $\frac{1}{8}$ "") white printed cotton (Fabric A)
- 1.5m (59 $\frac{1}{8}$ "") pale pink printed cotton (Fabric B)
- 1.5m (59 $\frac{1}{8}$ "") stiff iron-on interfacing
- Matching sewing threads
- Tailor's chalk

If the term 'storage hacks' sets your pulse racing, then stand by for the fabric baskets of your dreams. With their contrasting prints and rolled cuffs, this little-and-large duo have a look-pretty-anywhere quality and they're reversible. A bit of canny folding gives them a square-based structure, which keeps them looking neat and feeling roomy.

Pack yours with craft supplies, toys or maybe even laundry. FYI: the smaller basket is just the right size for stashing whatever craft project you've left languishing beside the sofa. Sorted.

LARGE BASKET

Step one Press both fabrics before starting. Mark out a 95 x 59cm (37 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 23 $\frac{1}{4}$ "") rectangle on both Fabrics A and B, then cut them out with a 1cm ($\frac{3}{8}$ "") seam allowance. If the patterns are directional, bear in mind the shorter measurement will be the height of the baskets. **01**

Step two Using the fabric as a template, cut a piece of iron-on interfacing rectangle with the shiny side facing, then place the Fabric B rectangle on top of the interfacing, right side (RS)

up and aligning the edges. Press to seal the two layers together. **02**

Step three Next, fold the fabric and interfacing piece in half along the length, with the fabric sides together and aligning the short edges. Position the folded edge to the left, then pin the opposite edge and the bottom edge, leaving the top edge open. Repeat this step with the Fabric A rectangle, RS together. Finally, sew the pinned edges using a 1cm ($\frac{3}{8}$ "") seam allowance. **03**

Step four To create the base of the bucket, flatten out one of the corners of the Fabric A piece, aligning the seams to create a point. The side seam should be running in a straight line away from you. **04**

Step five Measure 12cm (4 $\frac{3}{4}$ "") up from the point of the corner and draw a line horizontally across the seam. Pin along this line and sew in place. Repeat Steps 4-5 to make a second corner. **05**

Step six Trim the corners, 1cm ($\frac{3}{8}$ "") from the stitching. Repeat Steps 4-5 with the Fabric B rectangle. **06**

Step seven Turn the Fabric B piece RS out, then tuck the Fabric A piece inside it, wrong sides (WS) together,

and aligning the edges of the base and the seams.

Step eight Fold the top raw edges of the fabrics to the WS by 1cm ($\frac{3}{8}$ ""), pinning the folded edges together as you go. Sew using a 0.5cm ($\frac{1}{4}$ "") seam allowance.

Step nine To create the cuff, fold the top edge of the basket over by approximately 2cm ($\frac{3}{4}$ ""), then fold it over again by about 7cm (2 $\frac{3}{4}$ "").

SMALL BASKET

Step one Repeat Steps 1-9, this time cutting Fabrics A and B and the iron-on interfacing to 63 x 42cm (24 $\frac{7}{8}$ x 16 $\frac{1}{2}$ "") rectangles.

Step two When you reach Step 5, measure 7.5cm (3") up from the corner points to mark the line, and at Step 9, fold the top edge of the basket over by approximately 2cm ($\frac{3}{4}$ ""), then again by about 5cm (2") to create the cuff of the basket.

WEEKEND VIBES

Whip-up a cute pair of
pom pom pjs thanks
to Jessica Entwistle's
easy how-to





HOW TO MAKE... PYJAMA SHORTS

YOU WILL NEED

- Pair of old shorts that fit you (to trace and create your new pattern)
- Pattern paper, for the template
- Fabric: 1mx115cm (1¹/₈ yd x 45in) (see notes)
- Pom pom trim: 2m (2¹/₄ yd)
- Elastic: 25mm x 1m (1in x 1¹/₈ yd)
- Erasable pen
- Matching thread
- Basic sewing kit

NOTES

- Use a 1cm (³/₈in) seam allowance
- Fabric and elastic quantity dependent on the size of shorts you are making so be sure to make a test before purchasing fabric

CREATING THE PATTERN

Step one You need to create two pattern pieces – the front of the shorts and the back. Lay the paper flat with your shorts or trousers folded in half vertically, so that one side of the front of your shorts/trousers is showing. **01**

Step two Smooth out the sides to mark the true outline. As the top of the final shorts will be elasticated, the pattern piece from both sides will go straight up and not curve inwards. Draw around your existing garment, adding a little extra to the sides 2.5-5cm (1-2in) if your current pair are tight fitting. If you are using trousers as the template, mark the point on your paper where you would like the hem to be – ours measure approx 10cm (4in) from the crotch seam to hem.

Step three Repeat for the back of the shorts. The shorts crotch seam is probably longer at the back, so note how much longer. Also, the shorts back will most likely be wider.

Step four For both front and back, add 8cm (3¹/₈in) to the top seam and 2cm (¾in) to the bottom seam, as well as a 1cm (³/₈in) seam allowance to both the side seams and the

crotch seams.

Step five Cut out your paper patterns and use them to create a mirror pair for both the front and back pieces from the fabric. Mark the two front pieces as F (front) and the two back pieces as B (back), then mark 1cm (³/₈in) and 8cm (3¹/₈in) down from the top edge and 2cm (¾in) up from the bottom edges with the erasable pen. **02**

SEWING THE FRONT AND BACK

Step one Take the two front pieces and pin them right side (RS) together along the curved crotch seam and sew from top to bottom. Finish the raw edges of the seam to prevent fraying. **03**

Step two Repeat for the two back pieces. Press both seams to the same side (so that when you join the front and back the seams will nest).

Step three Pin the shorts front to the shorts back RS together along the side seams. Sew together as before. Press the seams to the back. **04**

Step four Pin the crotch front and back together, aligning the front and back central seams. Sew together as before. Press the seam to the back. **05**

ADDING THE POM POM TRIM

Step one Fold up the raw edge of one of the shorts legs by 1cm (³/₈in) to the wrong side (WS). Press. Fold and press again so that the raw edge is enclosed and the bottom edge of the shorts is along the 2cm (¾in) marked line. Topstitch along the edge of the folded seam. Press.

Step two Pin the pom pom trim inside the shorts leg along the folded edge, starting near the crotch seam at the back of the shorts. Cut off the excess trim when you get to the beginning of your stitching. Sew the pom pom trim to the shorts.

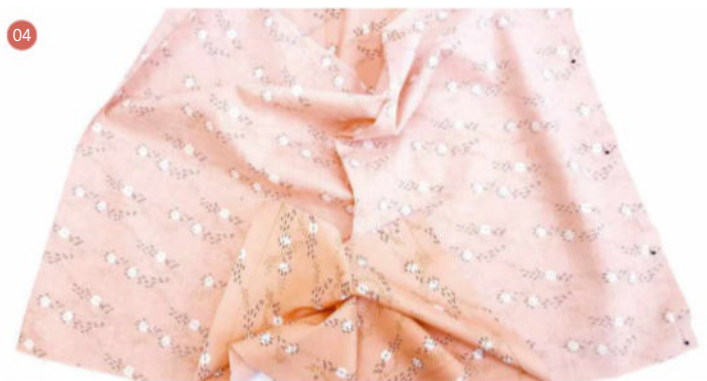
Step three Repeat for the second shorts leg. **06**

ADDING THE WAISTBAND

Step one Fold over the top edge of the shorts to the WS by 1cm (³/₈in). Press. **07**

Step two Fold the pressed edge to the 8cm (3¹/₈in) marked line on the WS and press. This is the elastic channel and should be just over 2.5cm (1in) wide.

Step three Starting near the back seam of the shorts, sew the elastic channel to the shorts, leaving a 6cm



(2³/₈in) gap to insert the elastic. Sew close to the folded-over edge. Topstitch close to the top edge of the shorts as well.

Step four Measure the waist and work out how you would like the shorts to fit. Our elastic is approx 12cm (4³/₄in) longer than the waist measurement so that the waistband will sit below the natural waist but can still stretch over the hips. Mark the elastic accordingly.

Step five Using a safety pin, thread the elastic through the elastic channel all the way around and out the other side. **08**

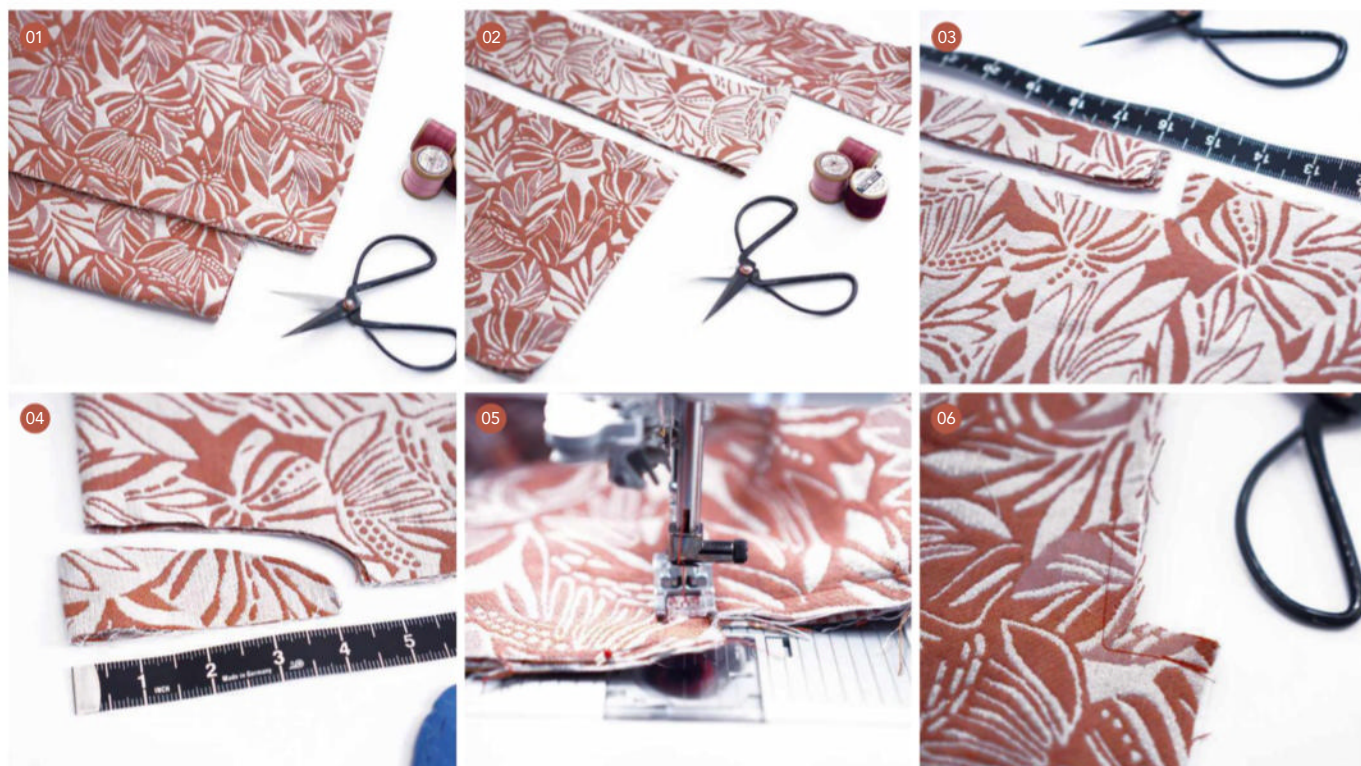
Step six Pin the elastic to check fit, then cut off any excess and sew with two rows of stitching along the overlap for strength. Stretch the waistband outwards so the elastic sits back inside the channel. Stitch the opening closed to finish, pulling the fabric straight as you go.



THROWN-ON GLAMOUR

Sew an effortlessly elegant duster coat as your go-to outer layer for the summer months with this patternless project from Juliet Uzor





HOW TO MAKE... A DUSTER JACKET

YOU WILL NEED

- Medium-weight woven fabric with minimal drape: 2mx59in (2¼ydx140cm)
- Matching thread
- Basic sewing kit

NOTES

- Use a 1.5cm (⅝in) seam allowance

If you've got a piece of medium-weight fabric in your stash that's crying out to be worn, then this could be the perfect project for you! Ideal for showing off a bold print, this easy-wear duster jacket will become your new favourite garment. Comfortable, breathable, and easy-to-sew.

With some simple measurements, a few clever cuts, and hardly any wasage, this style of garment is a hit with sustainable sewists worldwide. Now it's your turn to give it a go!

TAKING YOUR MEASUREMENTS

Step one Measure from your shoulder to calf to determine the final length you would like your duster to be. This is the length (A).
Step two Measure the length from your nape to shoulder and add 18cm (7in). This is the width (B).

CUTTING OUT

Step one From the main fabric, cut: Front: two rectangular pieces using measurements AxB.
Back: one rectangular piece folded lengthwise using measurements AxB-10cm (4in) **01**
Centre Front Band: 12.5cm (5in) wide. Ax2+20cm (8in) length

Sleeve Cuffs: 12.5cm (5in) wide x 79cm (31in) long
Pockets: two 23x33cm (9x13in) **02**

SIDE SEAMS

Step one Lay the Front and Back rectangles on top of each other at the side seams. Mark a point 38cm (15in) from the top vertically. From that point, measure and mark 3.5cm (1½in) horizontally. This should form a thin new rectangle which you can cut away. The 38cm (15in) length is the armhole. The remainder is the side seam. **03**

NECKLINE CREATION

Thst this is only for the Back piece.

Step one Starting from the top of the folded edge of the Back, mark 3.5cm (1½in) along the fold.
Step two Along the width, measure and mark 10cm (4in) widthways.
Step three Cut this piece out, making sure it curves in the same way as the example in the step image. **04**

ASSEMBLING THE DUSTER

Step one With right sides (RS) together, pin and sew the Front and Back pieces together at the shoulder. Finish and press the seam.

Step two Pin the side seams together, RS facing. Sew, pivot at the underarm corner. **05**
Step three Snip into this corner before finishing the raw edges. **06**
Step four Press the seam open. Repeat for the opposite side seam.

FINISHING THE NECKLINE

Step one Fold the long Centre Front Band lengthways and press.
Step two With RS together, pin the band to the centre front of the duster and around the back neckline. **07**
Step three Finish the raw edge and give it a good press.

INSERTING THE SLEEVE CUFFS

Step one With RS together, pin the short edges of each sleeve cuff together. Press open the seam. Repeat with the other sleeve cuff.
Step two Fold the cuffs lengthways and press.
Step three Turn the duster inside out. With RS together, pin the cuffs onto the sleeve line. Sew, finish and press open. **08**
Step four Understitch the cuff seam allowance to the duster for added stability. **09**
Step five Press the cuff. **10**



FINISHING TOUCHES

Step one Finish the raw edges of the two Pocket fabric pieces. **11**

Step two Fold over 1cm ($\frac{3}{8}$ in) around the four edges of the Pockets. Press and fold 2.5cm (1in) at the top edges of both Pockets.

Step three Topstitch along the top edges of both Pocket pieces.

Step four Try the duster on and pin the Pockets in place in a position that feels comfortable for you. We positioned the Pockets at the side seams and adjusted the height.

Step five Sew the Pockets onto the duster. Backstitch at each end to secure.

Step six Finish the raw edges along the bottom edge of the duster. Fold and press 2.5cm (1in) at the hem and sew the hem. **12**

Step seven Topstitch around the edge of the neckline band to finish. For a really unique finish, try adding some embroidered ribbon to the sleeve hems. Simply stitch on by hand for an extra flourish.





Pamper day

Jess entwistle shows you how to sew simple
scrunchies and a matching zip pouch to
store them in - a perfect gift set



HOW TO MAKE... ZIP POUCH

YOU WILL NEED

- Fabric A: 30x35cm for the outer main and zip tabs
- Fabric B: 30x20cm for the outer base
- Fabric C: 30x50cm for the lining
- Wadding: 30x50cm
- Zip: 30cm
- Matching sewing thread
- Erasable fabric pen
- Basic sewing kit

NOTES

- Use a 1cm seam allowance
- Use a walking foot if you have one

CUTTING OUT

- Step one** From fabric A cut:
Outer Main: two 27x16cm
Zip End Strips: two 6x2.5cm
- Step two** From fabric B cut:
Outer Base: two 27x10cm
- Step three** From fabric C cut:
Lining: two 27x24cm (lining)
- Step four** From the wadding cut:
Wadding: two 27x24cm

MAKING THE BAG OUTERS

- Step one** Fold over the short sides of the two Zip End Strips by 1cm to the wrong side (WS) and press. Fold in half to make two strips 2x2.5cm.
- Step two** Trim the zip to 25cm. Sandwich the zip ends between the Zip End Strips and topstitch.
- Step three** Take one of the Outer Base pieces and pin it right side (RS) facing along the bottom edge of one of the Outer Main pieces. Sew together. Press seam open. Cut a 3cm square from each bottom corner (on the Outer Base fabric).
- Step four** Cut a 3cm square from the bottom two corners on one Wadding piece. Pin the Outer piece WS facing the Wadding. Align all the sides.
- Step five** Topstitch either side of the

seam line, then stay stitch all the way around the outside.

Step six Repeat the above steps to make the second bag Outer section. **01**

ASSEMBLING THE BAG

- Step one** Cut away a 3cm square from each bottom corner on the Lining pieces.
- Step two** Place the zip centrally on top of one of the outer sections along the top edge, teeth facing down. Place one of the Lining pieces RS down on top, so the zip is sandwiched between them. Clip to hold, then sew the sandwich together with a 1cm seam allowance. **02**
- Step three** Fold the Lining back so the WS of the Outer section is facing the WS of the Lining and press. Topstitch along the edge of the seam. Repeat with the second outer and lining. **03**
- Step four** Open the zip. Place the Outer sections RS facing and the Lining RS facing, aligning all edges. Pin/clip together. **04**
- Step five** Sew up both long sides, taking care to not to sew through the Zip Ends fabric. Sew up the

bottom edge of the Outer sections, and sew up the bottom edge of the Lining, leaving a turning gap in the bottom of the Lining.

Step six To box the four corners, pull each corner section outwards and pin/clip together, aligning seams. Sew together to create the box corner. Repeat to make all four corners.

Step seven Turn RS out through the turning gap, push out corners and seams. Tuck turning gap fabric inside and close by hand or by machine, tuck back inside the bag. Press to finish.



HOW TO MAKE... SCRUNCHIE

YOU WILL NEED

- For each scrunchie
- Fabric A: 50x12cm
- Elastic, 6mm: 21cm
- Matching sewing thread
- Erasable fabric pen
- Basic sewing kit

NOTES

- Use a 1cm seam allowance

MAKING SCRUNCHIE OUTER

Step one Take the fabric A strip and fold it in half lengthways wrong sides (WS) facing. Pin, then sew, leaving 4cm unsewn at both ends. Press. **01**

Step two Turn the sewn strip right side (RS) out through one of the open ends. Press.

Step three Pin the short raw edges RS facing. **02**

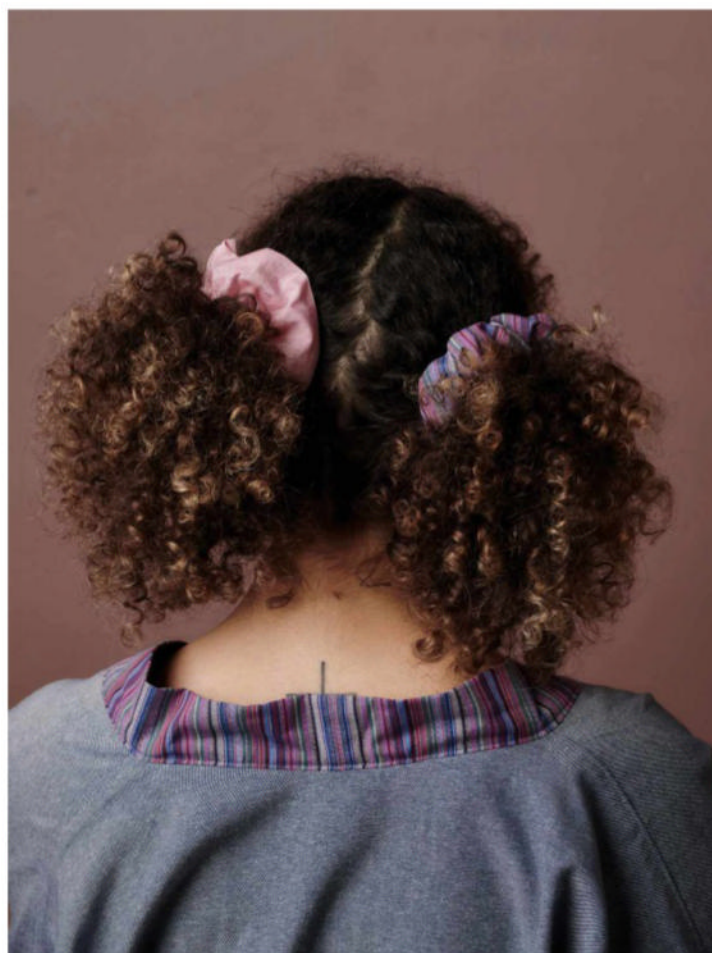
Step four Sew together with a 1cm seam allowance, leaving 3cm gaps either side of the just sewn seam. Press, tucking the raw edges inside.

ADDING THE ELASTIC

Step one Thread the elastic through the scrunchie. Overlap the elastic by 1–2cm and pin to hold. **03**

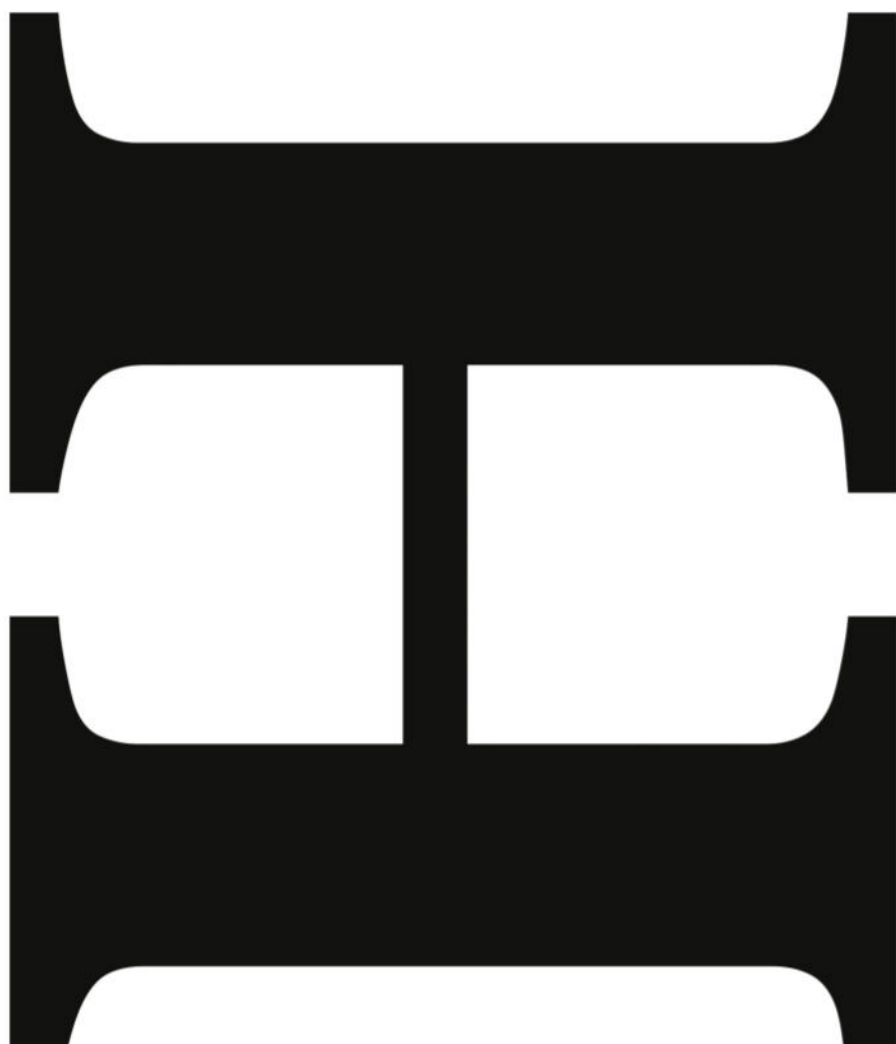
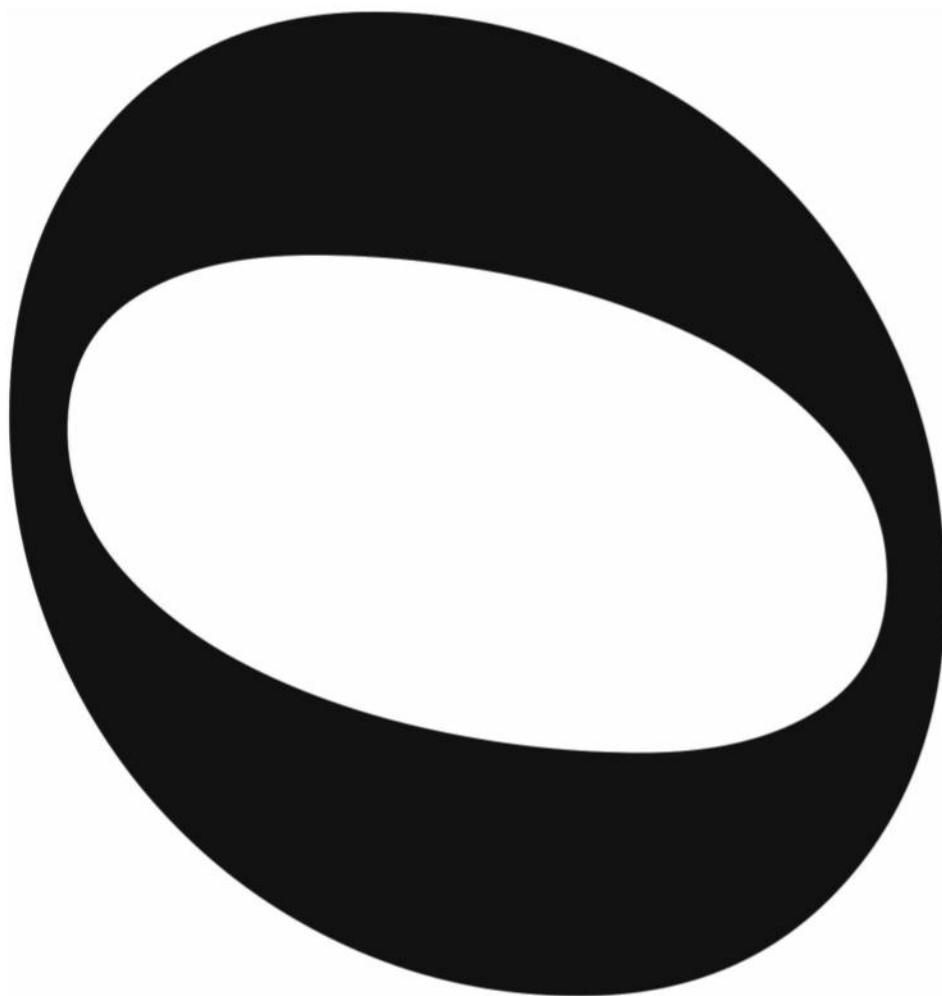
Step two Sew the elastic together where pinned. Sew across the overlapped elastic a number of times to secure it.

Step three Close the scrunchie turning gap with a small ladder stitch to finish. **04**



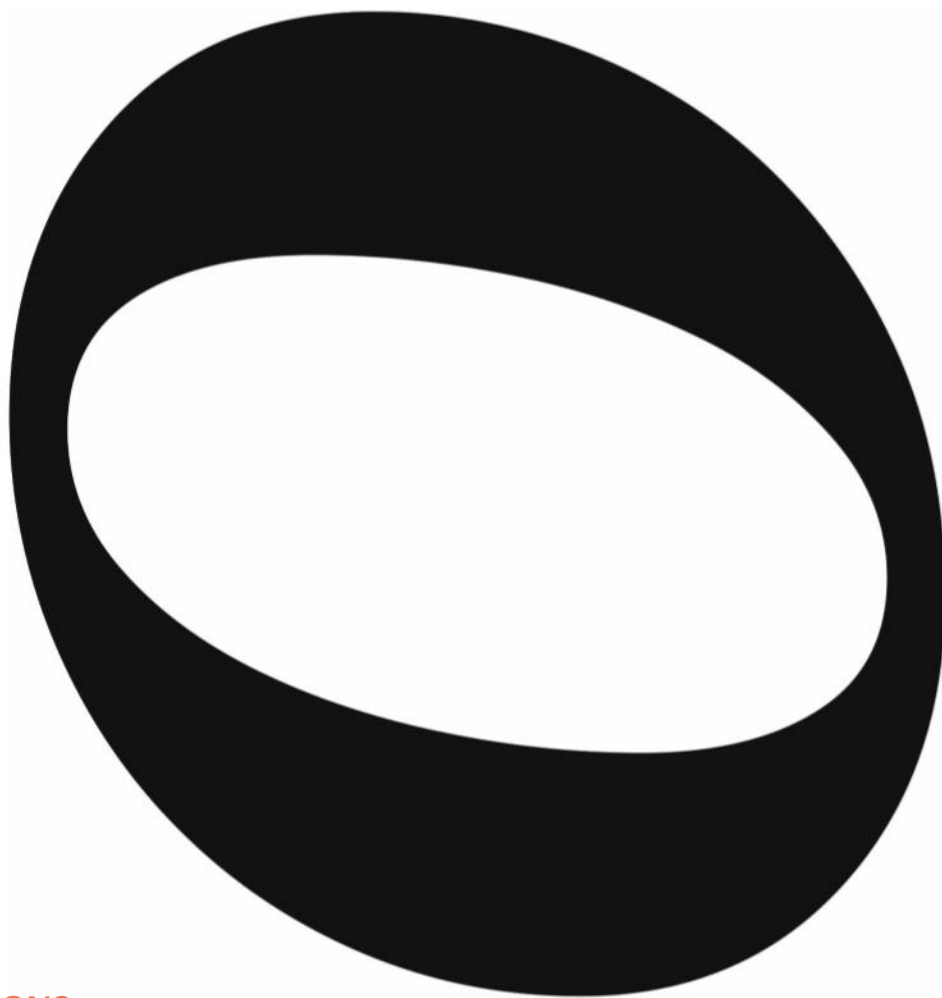
TEMPLATES

HERE ARE THE FULL-SIZE TEMPLATES
TO MAKE THE APPLIQUÉ CUSHIONS
AND FLORAL BUNTING





CUSHIONS
PAGE 10

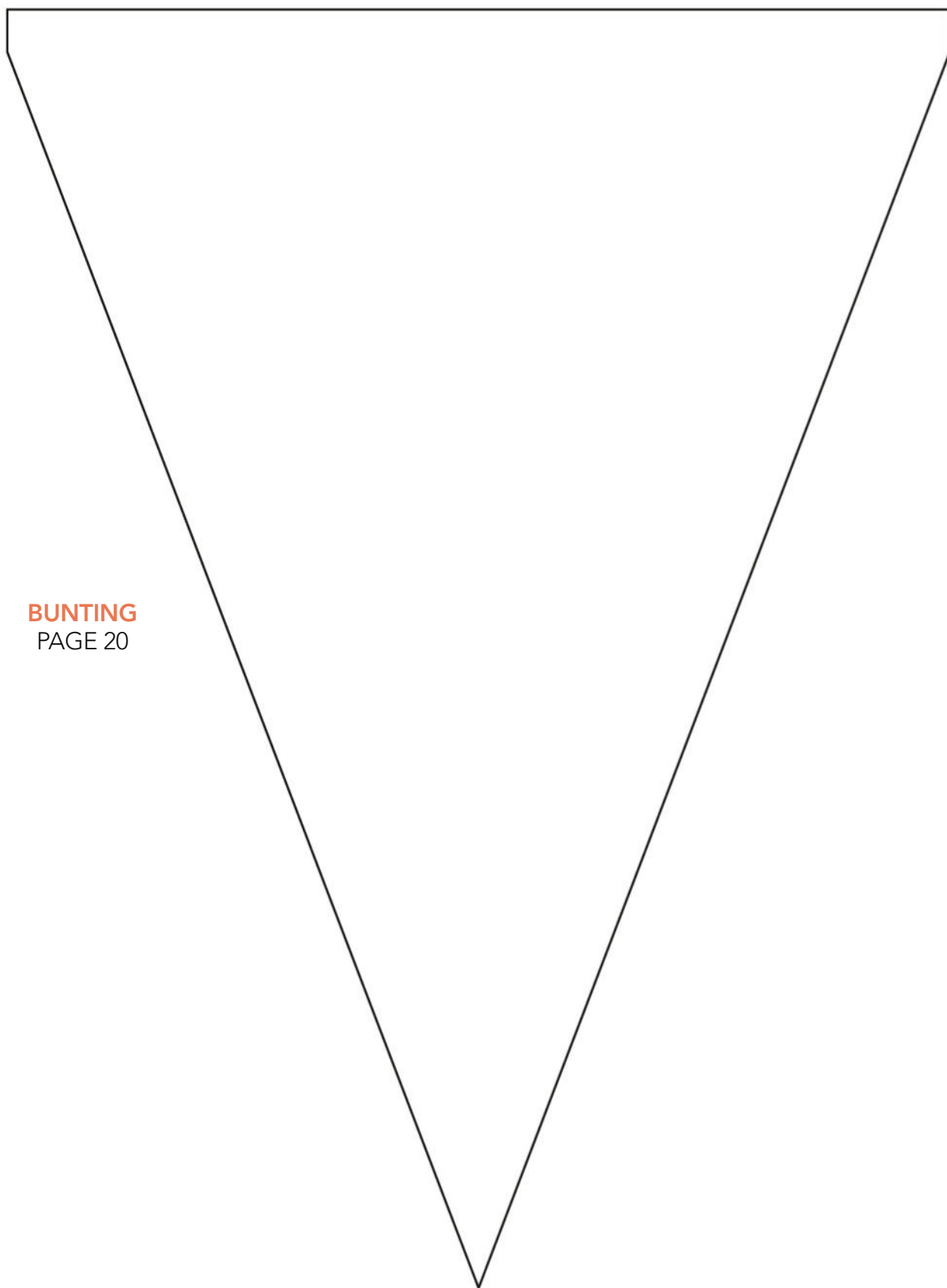


CUSHIONS
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CUSHIONS
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BUNTING
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FRENCH TOAST

We wanted to share the perfect breakfast recipe to make your day extra special - Jason's Sourdough Very Berry French Toast.



HOW TO MAKE... BERRY FRENCH TOAST

INGREDIENTS

- 3–4 slices of Jason's White Ciabattin
- 2 large eggs
- 1 cup whole milk
- ½ teaspoon cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter

Picture this: fluffy slices of Jason's White Ciabattin, soaked in vanilla and cinnamon batter, crisped to golden perfection, and topped with berries. See more at jasonssourdough.co.uk

METHOD

Step one Whisk together the eggs, milk, cinnamon, and vanilla in a shallow bowl. Dip your slices of Ciabattin into the mixture, ensuring they're fully coated. Melt the butter in a heavy-bottomed pan over medium-high heat, then cook the slices until golden brown on both sides (about 3–4 minutes).

Step two Serve warm with fresh berries, maple syrup, and a dust of powdered sugar to add a touch of sweetness to your morning.



CHOCOLATE, CHERRY & GINGER BROOKIES

A delicious mash-up of two favourite sweet treats



HOW TO MAKE... BROWNIE COOKIES

Makes 16 squares

Preparation time: 30 minutes

Cooking time: 30 minutes

Allergens: Dairy, Gluten, Egg

INGREDIENTS

For the cookie layer:

- 120g salted butter
- 120g soft light brown sugar
- 1 medium egg
- ½ tsp vanilla extract
- 225g plain flour
- ½ tsp bicarbonate of soda
- ¼ tsp salt
- 1 tbsp cornflour
- 100g milk chocolate chips
- 4 balls of Opies Stem Ginger, finely diced

For the brownie layer:

- 100g dark chocolate
- 100g salted butter
- 2 medium eggs
- 140g caster sugar
- 50g plain flour
- 25g cocoa powder
- 100g milk chocolate chips
- ½ jar of Opies Cocktail Cherries, halved and drained

METHOD

Step one In a bowl beat the butter and sugar together until light and fluffy. Add the egg and vanilla extract and beat again before adding the flour, bicarbonate of soda, salt, cornflour, chocolate chips and stem ginger. Bring it all together using your hands until the mixture forms a dough.

Step two Press the dough into the bottom of a lined 22x22cm square baking tin, making sure it reaches the edges then place in the freezer to firm up for 25 minutes.

Step three Meanwhile to make the brownie layer, preheat the oven to 180°C / 160°C fan / Gas 4. In a pan, melt the chocolate and butter and leave to cool slightly. Beat the eggs and caster sugar in a separate bowl until thick then fold into the melted chocolate. Mix in the flour, cocoa powder, chocolate chips and cocktail cherries until well combined then pour over the frozen cookie dough.

Step four Bake in the oven for 30-35 minutes or until cooked through – you want to achieve a slight wobble on the top before taking it out. Leave to cool in the

tin before refrigerating until ready to slice up and serve.

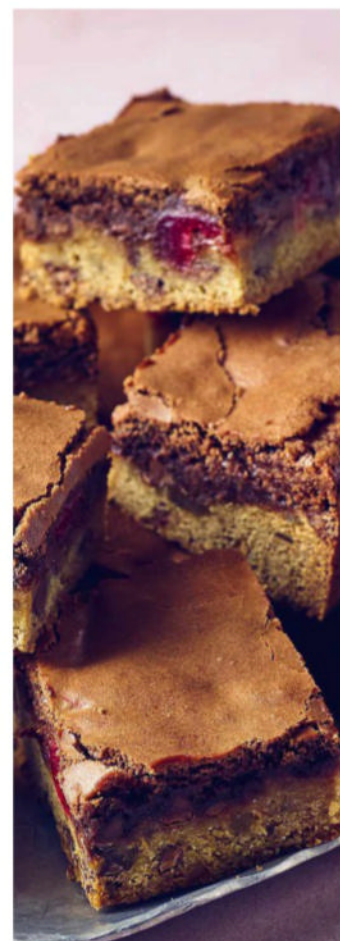
ABOUT BENNETT OPIE

The Opies family has been in the business of flavour-making since 1880 and have been excited by the endless possibilities ever since. From pickle obsessives to larder grazers, home mixologists to pub landlords, Bake Off viewers to Michelin star chefs, Opies exists for everyone and anyone that wants to add character, depth and dimension to their snacking, cooking and eating.

Commitment to quality is at the heart of everything. Opies meticulously select the finest ingredients, sourced from longstanding trusted suppliers. With time-honoured recipes and dedication to excellence, Opies make the complicated art of flavour easy – but no less filled with wonder.

You can see more, and find out where to buy Opies Stem Ginger and Opies Cocktail Cherries for this recipe at bennetttopie.com.

@OpiesFoods



LEMON AND PISTACHIO CELEBRATION CAKE

A light pistachio and lemon flavoured sponge layered with Bonne Maman Raspberry and Wild Blueberry Conserve



HOW TO MAKE... CELEBRATION CAKE

INGREDIENTS

- 6 large eggs
- 360g unsalted butter, softened
- 360g golden caster sugar
- 90g ground almonds
- 30g ground pistachio nuts
- 270g self-raising flour
- Finely grated zest and juice of 1 lemon

TO DECORATE

- 300ml double cream
- Bonne Maman Raspberry Conserve
- Bonne Maman Wild Blueberry Conserve

INSTRUCTIONS

Step one Mixed berries, fresh herbs, and icing sugar

Step two Heat the oven to 180°C, 160°C fan, gas 4. Line the base and sides of a 3 x 20cm, straight-side cake tins with baking paper.

Step three Put all the cake ingredients in a large bowl and beat together with an electric whisk until smooth and very creamy. Divide the mixture evenly between 3 tins.

Step four Bake for 30-35 minutes or until a skewer inserted into the centre comes out clean. Leave on a rack to cool.

Step five Whip the cream until it is just thickened, don't over whip. Put one sponge layer on a serving plate.

Spread generously with Wild Blueberry Conserve. Add half the cream and spread to within 2cm of the edge.

Step six Repeat with the second sponge and the Raspberry Conserve.

Step seven Top the last sponge with mixture of fresh fruits and herbs. Dust with icing sugar and any left over pistachio crumbs.

Step eight Layer up the cake. Keep chilled in the 'fridge and serve within an hour.

Bonne Maman's products are available from all major supermarkets and their online sites, most good food shops nationwide. You can find more Bonne Maman recipes at bonnemaman.co.uk



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