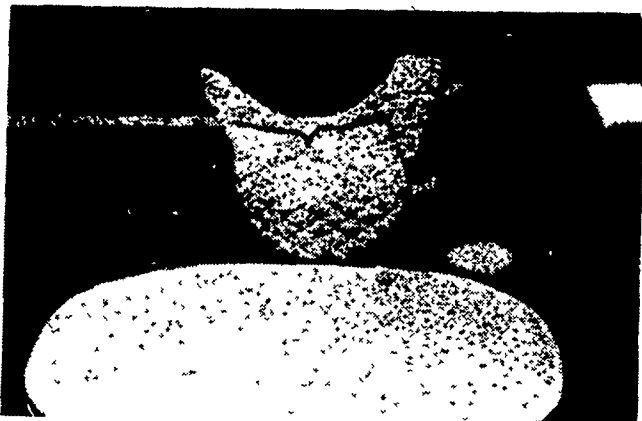


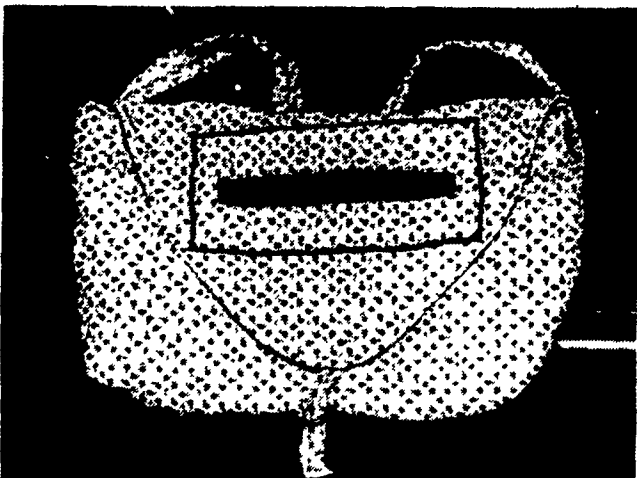


Aggie Arnold-Norman shows a vinyl duffel bag she made.



Aggie Arnold-Norman made this hen on a basket to be given as a gift. As an idea of what to do with these baskets, Aggie put sewing items on the inside, which made the gift perfect for a seamstress. A bun warmer was another idea given for the possible use of the hen project.

Homestead Notes



This is a prequilted project featuring a faced zipper with exposed teeth.



The various steps in zipper application for a faced zipper with exposed teeth are shown above.

Brighten up Winter with crafts from prequilted fabrics

By SUSAN KAUFFMAN

Dreary days in February and March in this part of our country seem drearier since the passing of the quilting parties that used to perk up the bluest spirits which traditionally occur this time of year. The holidays are long over and Spring is too far away for much enthusiasm in cleaning closets or polishing windows. It is too cold to think about sewing warm weather fashions and too late to get much wear out of Winter garments sewn now. The garden seeds are already ordered and have arrived to await warmer earth. What is there to do in these long, dreary days of late Winter?

While stories are also making the shift from cold weather to warm, they are providing one possible outlet for the woman who wants something different to occupy part of her time. Rather than making a quilt, why not work with pre-quilted materials now at drastic-clearance prices in most fabric stores which still have them in stock.

"Although pre-quilted fabrics are popular for garments with the oriental look in vogue, they also make interesting accessories, gifts, and bazaar items," states a worksheet prepared by Lancaster County Extension Service. Agnes Arnold-Norman recently instructed a class in pre-quilted fabric crafts and gave basic information for sewing these material along with patterns for making a number of craft items.

CRAFT IDEAS

If you can not afford to repaper the kitchen after paying taxes, try perking up your spirits and your kitchen's appearance with new, brightly colored appliance covers.

If your family is weary of the same vegetables from the freezer and shelf and the same menus week after week, try sparking up mealtime with new placemats made from pre-quilted fabric and decorative bias tape trim.

Cheer up a daughter who also finds this in-between-everything time of year more bearable by stitching a pretty and practical shoulder bag or backpack with pre-quilted fabric and zanny zipper applications.

Sew a tote bag in which to carry the many casseroles prepared for covered dish dinners which abound in Winter.

Make a duffel bag or a cosmetic case or a tennis racket cover for the college student who would appreciate a mid-semester pick-me-up.

All these items and many more can be made with pre-quilted fabric by following basic guidelines.

SEWING HINTS

Sewing and cutting techniques have to be modified in some instances when working with pre-quilted fabrics. This is necessary in order to compensate for the extra thickness of the material and the quilting threads.

Some basics to remember when cutting pre-quilted fabric are to cut one layer at a time; do not cut fabric with the pattern placed on a fold; use weights or long pins to hold patterns in place; use sharp scissors for cutting; and handle cut pieces carefully to prevent quilting stitches from coming unstitched.

When sewing seams, some type of treatment of the seam allowance will avoid fraying and separation of the layers. One treatment is an overcast stitch and a straight done in one operation by some sewing machines. The use of one row of straight stitches and a second row of zigzag stitches or two rows of straight stitches about 1/4 of an inch apart is another alternative. Binding edges with bias tape by sewing through all thicknesses at one or attaching one edge of the tape to one side of the allowance, folding over and stitching the other side of the tape down on the other side of the allowance provides a good finish. To avoid puckering the tape be sure to stitch both stitchings in the same direction. The seam binding can be decorative if the project is sewn wrong-sides together and the binding is placed over the right side of the material exposed in the seam allowance.

Closings on pre-quilted items can be fashioned from velcro strips, snaps, buttons, draw strings or zippers placed in seams or faced for a decorative look. With a faced zipper, the teeth are exposed rather than hidden under a flap of material as in conventional sewing techniques.

Agnes Arnold-Norman explained how to apply a faced zipper by cutting a piece of unquilted fabric from a pattern made by drawing a box on a piece of paper the size of the area for zipper placement. On the piece of paper, draw a rectangle around the area of the exposed zipper teeth. Overcast the edges of the facing fabric if the material seems to ravel. Place the facing fabric onto the pre-quilted fabric with right sides

together where the zipper is to be placed. Place the paper with the zipper teeth box on top of the facing. With small stitches, sew around the box made for the zipper teeth. Tear paper away. Cut open the box; turn and press facing to wrong side. Position the zipper under the opening and secure it with pins or tape. Top stitch the zipper in place.

Another important sewing technique when making pre-quilted fabric items is strap application. A triple fold strap is the strongest method to make a strap since a strip of fabric the length desired by three times its finished width is folded in thirds. Straps with a double thickness are easy to construct by folding the strap material so that the width overlaps 1/4 of an inch down the center of the underside of the strap. Use a zigzag stitch or overcast stitch over the exposed edge. Add stitching along both sides for extra strength.

Straps can be fastened by enclosing them in a seam, in a hem at the top of a bag or by folding one or two inches of the end of the strap under itself and top stitching it to the bag with two rows of stitching or any other decorative pattern such as a cross or box. Make the strap long enough to encircle the bag and top stitch down one side, across the bottom and up the other side for more strength.

To show how simple pre-quilted crafts can be, a few easy projects follow.

SMALL COSMETIC BAG

Cut a piece of pre-quilted fabric 8 inches wide and 11 inches long.

Fold right sides together.

Sew side seams.

Turn down hems at top.

Attach snaps or velcro to close top.

By folding at one-third the length, create a purse with a flap at the top.

TOTE BAG

1/2 yard will make a 19 inch by 15 inch tote.

Cut two rectangles 15 inches wide and 19 inches long.

Cut two rectangles 3 inches wide and 28 inches long.

(One of these straps will have to be pieced.)

Apply pockets as desired.

Sew bottoms and sides of the bag.

Line up right sides of side seam and bottom seam on each end of the bottom. Sew across the base of the triangles formed so that a 4 inch wide bottom results.

Hem top.

Make and attach straps.

PLACEMATS

1-1/4 yards will make six placemats (13 inches by 19 inches) and six to 10 coasters.

10-1/2 yards of bias for binding.

Face with a suitable material or use double-faced pre-quilted fabric (if you want reversible ones)

Cut out 13 inches by 19 inches ovals and apply desired bindings or ruffles.

HOT MITTS

Trace a pattern by using your hand and allowing ease and seam allowances.

Cut four to six layers depending on the thickness of the material.

Layer so that right sides will show inside and out.

Sew edges together, except wrist section.

Hem wrist area or apply bias tape.

Attach hanging loop.

APPLIANCE COVERS

To make appliance covers, measure the width and height of the front of the appliance and allow for seam allowances. Measure depth as for a toaster and the length up one side, across the top and down the other side. Cut two pieces (one front and one back) and one of the long pieces called a gusset which provides depth.

Sew front piece to gusset, easing at corners.

Sew back piece to gusset, easing at corners.

Hem unfinished edges.

Sew all pieces wrong side together and apply bias tape over seam allowances for decorative touch.

To make a cover for a crock pot or some similar round or oval shaped object, measure height and provide seam allowances at top and bottom.

Then measure distance around appliance allowing seam to join ends of this long piece together. Cut a circular or oval piece from a pattern drawn by inscribing around circumference of appliance.

Allow for extra width to cover attached handles.

For more specific instructions of construction and for many more instructions for other projects request pre-quilted crafts worksheets from Lancaster County Extension Service, Farm and Home Center, 1333 Arcadia Road, Lancaster, Pa. 17604.