

felt pocket



I first made one of these felt pockets for a friend who is an avid cyclist. She wanted more to give as gifts for her bike riding pals as it was the perfect size for holding all the little bits in her bike kit: an allen key, keys, GPS, bike light, etc...). This tutorial makes a 4 1/4" square, but you can modify these instructions to make a pocket of any size. Stitch your pocket by hand or with a sewing machine and embellish it or leave it plain. This is the perfect time to use a favorite button from your button collection.

MATERIALS & TOOLS:

- 4 1/4 x 11" piece of wool felt
- sharp scissors
- cotton embroidery floss
- straight pins
- sewing needle
- pencil or sharpie
- button
- sewing machine (optional)



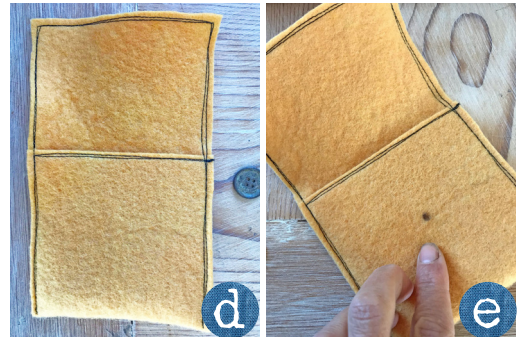
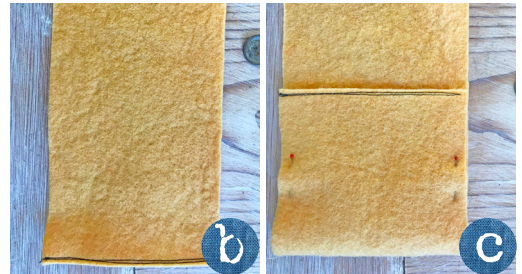
REFER TO "NOTES AND BASIC STITCHES" ON PAGE 2.

Gather your materials and cut your felt to size. (photo a)

For this project, my template was 4 1/4 x 11" (half of a sheet of 8 1/2 x 11" paper).

SEWING MACHINE & REINFORCED HAND-STITCHED (ochre & off-white pocket):

1. Decide if you will embellish your pocket. Consider the placement of the design when the felt is folded into a pocket and the location of the button and button hole. A reminder that the back of your stitching will be visible when you open the pocket if you choose to decorate the top flap.
2. Sew two lines of stitching along one of the short sides, 1/8" in from the sides and the edge. (photo b) [If hand sewing, blanket stitch this edge with 2-ply embroidery floss.]
3. Fold the sewn edge up so the the folded section measures 4" from the folded base to the sewn edge. Pin in place. (photo c)
4. Beginning at one folded corner, 1/8" in from the side, machine stitch around the perimeter of the pocket, ending at the opposite folded corner. I do this line of stitching two times. (photo d) [If hand sewing, blanket stitch the perimeter of the pocket with 2-ply embroidery floss.]
5. Fold over the flap and lay the button in place on the pocket. Mark with a dot where the button should be attached. (photo e)
6. Sew on the button (make sure you are only sewing through the top layer of the felt pocket).
7. Fold over the flap and determine where the slit for your button hole will go. With the tip of sharp scissors, make a small slit. The felt will stretch, so it is better to start small and snip a bit more if needed.
8. For added reinforcement, sew two lines of stitching around the button hole. (photo f) [If hand sewing, blanket stitch the perimeter of the button hole with 2-ply embroidery floss.] (photo g)
9. Trim the edges of your pocket if needed.



MOST BASIC HAND SEWING INSTRUCTIONS (green pocket):

1. Fold your felt 4" up from the base, creating a pocket shape with a single layer flap that extends above the folded pocket. Pin in place.
2. Using the running stitch and 2-ply of embroidery floss, stitch both sides of the pocket.
3. Sew on the button through the top layer of the felt pocket.
4. Fold over the flap and determine where the slit for your button hole will go. With the tip of sharp scissors, make a small slit. The felt will stretch, so it is better to start small and snip a bit more if needed.
5. Trim the edges of your pocket if needed. I rounded the corners of my basic pocket. (photo h)

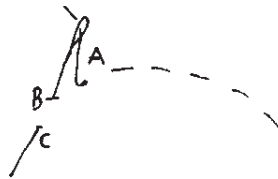


NOTES & BASIC STITCHES:

- Embroidery floss has 6 plies (threads) and the plies are easily separated. Most embroidery patterns use 1 to 3 plies. Long strands can get easily tangled, cutting them to 18-inch strands helps prevent this. It also helps to very gently separate the pieces from the center of the strand instead of starting at one end.
- If your thread becomes too short while you are sewing, attach a new piece of thread to the end with a knot. Tie it close to the felt and hide the knot.
- Keep stitches even and hide knots.
- Felt is very flexible to work with; it can be pulled and stretched as needed, and because it doesn't fray you can trim as you work if your pieces are not lining up.

RUNNING & DOUBLE RUNNING STITCH

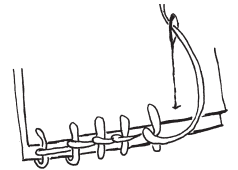
- Start with the threaded needle on the back side of your felt and bring it up through the felt (A) and back down into the front side (B).
- Pull it the whole way through, then bring the threaded needle back up through the felt from the back side (C).
- Try to keep the size of the stitches and the space between them consistent.
- A double running stitch is used to make a solid line.
- Start with a running stitch. When you reach the end, reverse your direction and fill in the space between the stitches with another running stitch so you have a solid line.



BLANKET STITCH

Note: these instructions are much easier to follow with your actual needle and thread in hand. The stitch is simple; the instructions sound complicated.

- Thread your needle and tie a knot at the tail.
- Starting between the sandwiched pieces, poke the needle through your top layer of felt about 1/8" from the edge. The knot will be between the two layers of felt where it will not be seen.
- Bring the thread around the edge of the two stacked pieces of the felt and poke it through the same spot as the first stitch.
- Pull your needle through the stitch you just made at the top edge. This anchors your thread but is not a true stitch.
- TO CONNECT TWO PIECES ALONG THE OUTER EDGES: Start a new stitch through the back side, 1/8" from your first stitch, and 1/8" in from the edge of the felt. Before you pull the stitch all the way, catch the loop through the top with your needle and pull tight. The thread should create a straight line that lies along the edges of your two pieces of felt. Continue your evenly spaced stitching (1/8" over, 1/8" in), pulling each stitch through from the back side and catching the loop as you go.
- TO CONNECT TWO LAYERS ALONG A SINGLE EDGE: push your needle from the top down through both layers. Dip through the back side making a small stitch and bring your needle up through the single layer, just outside where your first stitch went in. Before you pull the stitch all the way, catch the loop through the top with your needle and pull tight. The thread should create a straight line that lies along the edge of your top piece of felt. Continue your evenly spaced stitching (1/8" over, 1/8" in), pulling each stitch through from the back side and catching the loop as you go.
- To finish, connect your last stitch to your first stitch by sliding your needle underneath your first stitch and knotting it at the back. Push your needle between the layers and out through the front about 1 inch from the edge. The thread will be pulled inside, hiding the knot from view. Then cut off the excess thread very close to the top layer of the felt.



ABOUT KATA GOLDA:

Alison Kaplan is the creative force behind Kata Golda, a craft studio in the mossy seaside town of Port Townsend, WA.

Kata Golda is a flourishing business that explores crafts such as needlework, letterpress printing, bookbinding, block printing, hand-thrown pottery, hand-dyed textiles, and jewelry making. Alison finds inspiration in the woods, farmlands, and beaches of her Pacific Northwest wonderland.

See her work at www.katagolda.com.

