

patchwork hearts

sewing tutorial



Nothing is more inspiring to me than my ever-changing pile of fabric scraps. This is a delightful way to literally use up some scraps, and to metaphorically patch together and mend one's heart. Make a heart for yourself and pass a few on to someone who could use a little love.

MATERIALS & TOOLS:

- wool felt in any color (it will not show)
- fabric scraps (I used 9 ounce cotton/hemp muslin). Any fabric scraps will do. I like to use fabric of similar weight on each patchwork side
- cotton embroidery floss or thread
- stuffing material: I used a combination of lavender buds and buckwheat hulls.
- paper and pencil for tracing or drawing templates
- sharp scissors
- straight pins
- hand sewing needle

1. Refer to "Notes & Stitches" on page 2 and gather your tools and materials. **(photo a)**
2. Cut out your heart template. You can use the templates provided on page 3 or draw your own heart shape. It is important to have a template before you cut your fabric so you aren't wasting fabric in an attempt to make a perfect heart. The hearts that I drew may look haphazard, but I did quite a bit of redrawing until I was happy with their shapes. I did not want them to be perfectly symmetrical. I have included an image with the templates so you can see what the stitched heart looks like from each drawing.
3. Use your template to cut out one wool felt heart **(photo b)**. Use that cut-out heart as the template for the matching back side. **(photo c)**
4. Lay the felt hearts out so they mirror each other. Pin the patchwork scraps so they overlap and cover the wool hearts **(photo d)**. The fabric should extend beyond the edges (make sure you are applying your patchwork to the correct sides, the uncovered wool sides of the hearts should match up when you put them together). I used quite a few pins to hold the overlapping fabric in place.
5. Flip each heart over **(photo e)** and, using the wool felt heart on the back side as your guide, trim away the excess fabric from your patchwork. **(photo f & g)**
6. Use the whip stitch and 1 ply of embroidery floss to stitch the overlapping patchwork to each wool heart piece. **(photo h)**
7. Sandwich your hearts together, with the patchwork side facing out. Using 1 ply of embroidery floss, blanket stitch the edges together (you will be stitching through 4 layers of fabric). **(photo i)** You may need to trim the edges if there are places that no longer line up after stitching the patchwork on. I placed my stitches close together so the loose stuffing material would be contained.
8. Leave a 1" gap and fill your heart with stuffing. **(photo j)** I stuffed mine so they are firm but not bursting.
9. Continue the blanket stitch to close the gap and tie a knot. Pull your needle through the heart and snip the thread close to the fabric, it will sink into the stuffing and disappear.



NOTES:

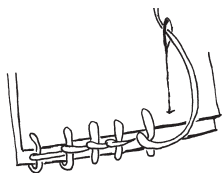
- Embroidery floss has 6 plies (threads) and the plies are easily separated. Most embroidery patterns use 1 to 3 plies. Long strands can get easily tangled, cutting them to 18-inch strands helps prevent this. It also helps to very gently separate the pieces from the center of the strand instead of starting 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.

STITCHES USED IN THIS PROJECT:

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.



THE WHIP STITCH

This stitch is used to connect two pieces of fabric along the outer edge or to connect two overlapping pieces.

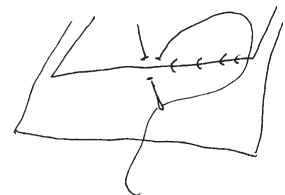
• **TO CONNECT TWO PIECES ALONG THE OUTER EDGE:**

Thread your needle and tie a knot at the tail. Start your first stitch between the two layers of felt to hide the knot. Wrap your thread around the two lined up edges and push your needle up through the two layers of felt. Repeat, spacing your stitches evenly.



• **CONNECTING TWO OVERLAPPING PIECES**

Thread your needle and tie a knot at the tail. Starting at the back side, poke your needle up through both layers of felt, 1/8" in from the edge and then push your needle through the single layer of felt, directly across from your first stitch and close to the overlapping edge. Continue your next stitch up through both layers, and then straight down through the single layer again with evenly spaced stitches. Make sure you are not pulling the stitches so tight that you cause the fabric to bunch.



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.



TEMPLATES:

You can reduce or enlarge the templates on your printer if you would like different sized hearts.

