

Super Simple Quilted Placemats

Do you have a couple of coordinating fat quarters that you just don't know what to do with? Then, this little quilting project might be for you. In it you will learn how to make placemats. This is also a fun way to practice your piecing, straight line or free motion quilting and binding on a small doable project. It's a perfect project for a beginner but also a quick and easy project for any level.



Keep the finished placemats for yourself. Or give them as gifts! If you want to make more than two, just double the fabric requirements then piece and quilt away!

The standard size for placemats is 12"-14" tall x 16"-20" wide. So you can always adjust this pattern a little if you want a smaller or bigger finished placemat. It's all good!

For best results, read through the directions completely before you start your project. That way you are sure to have all of the supplies at hand and a good understanding of the steps involved.

Getting Ready for This Placement Project



You'll need the following fabric and batting:

- Two coordinating fat quarters
- ½ yard batting or a craft size package of batting
- ½ yard backing and binding fabric (same fabric is used for both)



You'll need the following tools:

- [6 x 24" quilting ruler](#)
- Cutting Mat
- [Pressing Mat](#)
- [Sewing Clips](#)
- [45mm Rotary Cutter](#)
- Thread snips or [small scissors](#)

- [Seam ripper](#) (just in case...)
- Iron
- Sewing machine
- Matching or coordinating thread
 - Piecing Thread - can be the same as your quilting thread or thinner
 - Quilting Thread - [50s/3 \(30WT\) Cotton Machine Quilting Thread](#)
- Quarter Inch Foot (of your choosing)
- [Pins](#), basting spray or safety pins
- [Washi Tape](#) (optional)
- [Free Motion Foot](#) (optional)
- [Border Guide Foot](#) (optional)
- [Walking foot](#) with quilt bar(optional)
- [Heat Erasable Gel Pens](#) (optional)

Making the Placemat Top

Getting Ready For This Placemat Project

Prep your fabric...iron it, cut off any selvages and if necessary (as it was with my fat quarters) straighten one short edge and one long edge so you can make your upcoming cuts.

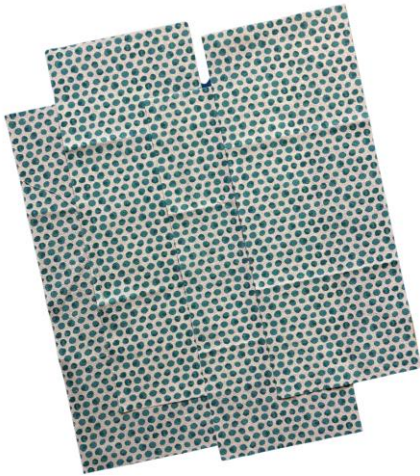
Step 1

From one fat quarter cut a 12" x 21/22" piece. Then cut this big piece into two 10" x 12" pieces. These will be the placemat middles.

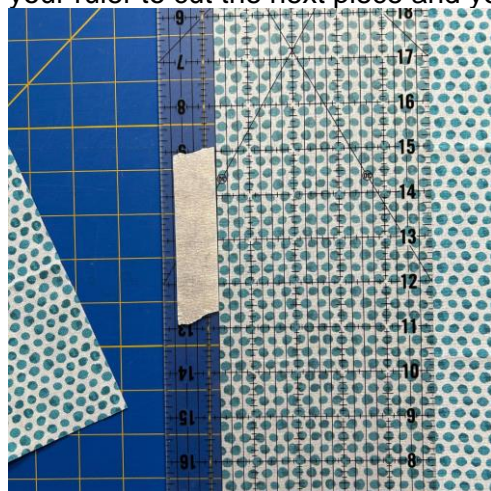


Step 2

From the other fat quarter cut a 12" x 21/22" piece. Then cut this big piece into four 4 3/4" x 12" pieces. These will be the placemat sides.



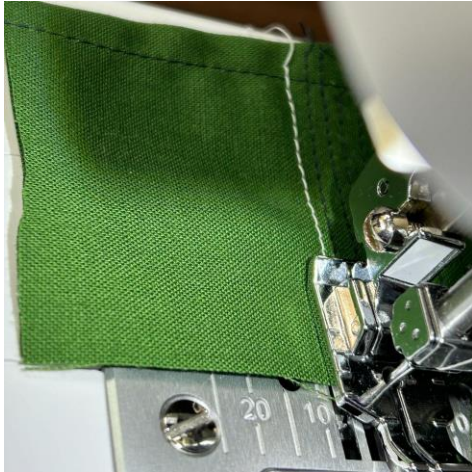
TIP: A neat trick or hack to make your cutting go faster is to use Washi Tape or Masking Tape on the top of the ruler at 4 ¾" away from your cutting edge. This way you can quickly line up your ruler to cut the next piece and you are less likely to mess up the measurement.



Step 3

Using the tread weight you prefer for piecing (*I am using the [Madam Sew 50s3 \(30wt\) cotton thread](#) from the Sand & Stone Set*), sew onto a leader or scrap piece of fabric and check to make sure your stitching is looking good before proceeding to the next step. Once you are satisfied with your stitching go to Step 4.

TIP: Don't skip this step as doing so might result in you having to rip out a seam instead of happily sewing along. I know this from experience.



Step 4

Using a quarter inch seam allowance, sew one 4 ¾" x 12" side piece to one 10" x 12" middle piece with right sides together. Be careful if using directional fabric. This is the start of your first placemat.

TIP: If you are worried about your fabric shifting while sewing, use [clips](#) to hold the pieces together. I did.

Do not remove these from under the presser foot when you have finished sewing.





Step 5

To save on thread and time, we are going to chain piece by starting the second placemat now...so repeat Step 1 but with the other middle piece and one of the side pieces. Keep these under the presser foot when done.



Step 6

Cut the leader piece off and set aside and continue to use it as needed throughout this project. Cut first placemat pieces free.

Sew the second 4 $\frac{3}{4}$ " x 12" piece to your first placemat middle on the other 12" side.



Step 7

Repeat Step 4 for your second placemat.



Step 8

Press the back of each unopened seam on your two placemats to set them. Do not iron, just press.

Now, open each side piece and do a quick finger press. This will help the seam go the right way more easily in the next step.

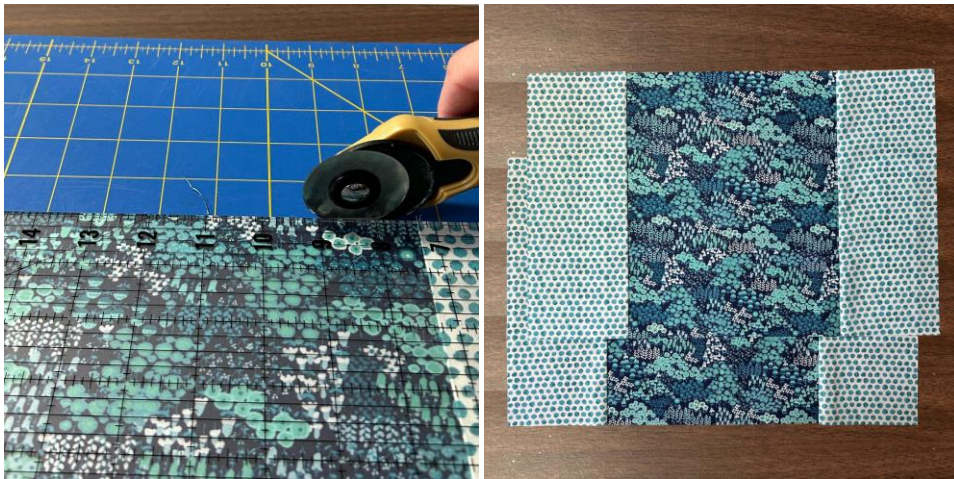


Step 9

Flip your placemats over and open the side fabrics out and press out toward the edge of your placemats. I like to use steam on this step to help set the seams.

Step 10

If needed, trim your edges so they are all even. You should now have two placemat tops.



Quilting and Finishing Your Placemats

You'll start by making your quilt sandwiches. *No...we are not making lunch or a snack...unless you need a break...LOL.* Then, we'll quilt and finally we'll bind. For this part, you can work on one placemat at a time or do each step for each placemat as you go. It's all up to you.

Step 1

Measure your placemat tops. Then, cut two pieces of batting $\frac{3}{4}$ "-1" longer and $\frac{3}{4}$ "-1" wider than your top pieces. Do the same with the backing fabric.

TIP: Follow the old saying..."Measure twice, cut once." It saves so much frustration and extra trips to the store.

We are making these pieces bigger because when we quilt some of the fabric and backing will be taken up so we need to give ourselves a little leeway. Plus, as you'll see in a later step, we'll need some of this extra for when we are quilting and traveling from one area to another.



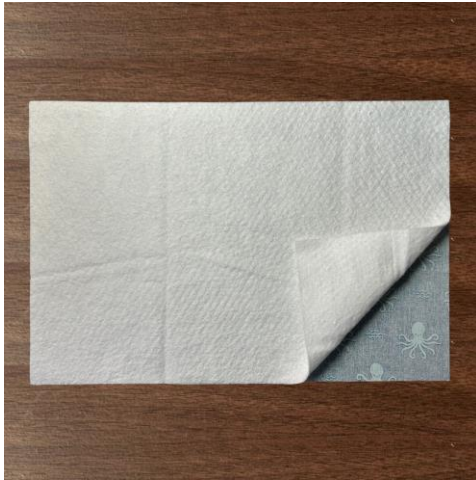
Step 2

Place the backing fabric right down on your work surface. Be mindful if using directional fabrics.



Step 3

Place your quilt batting on top of the backing fabric and make sure they are aligned.



Step 4

If you will be drawing a design to follow while quilting on your quilt top, this is the time to do it. (I talk a little about this in Step 7 of this section.)

Next, place your pieced placemat top right side up and centered on the backing and batting.



Step 5

Baste the layers together using your favorite method, being careful to keep the sandwich as flat as possible. Some people like pinning, others prefer spray basting. It's up to you. The goal is to make sure that the quilt sandwich doesn't shift while quilting.



Step 6

If you are not using the same weight thread for both piecing and quilting, then switch now to a [50s/3 \(30wt\) cotton thread](#) and a 90/14 or 100/16 sewing machine needle. In addition to the fabric, we want the quilting to be showcased by adding texture and interest. This thread weight will do a fine job of that.

Step 7

Now we quilt.

You can stitch straight lines like I did or you can break out the free motion foot and try your hand at that.

If straight stitching, stay with Step 7 and then go to Step 9. If Free Motion Quilting, skip now to Step 8.

For straight lines you have a few options.

- You can eyeball the lines. I did that on my test run of this project and found that I'm not that good at eyeballing straight lines even though I thought I was...:-).



- You can use a [Border Guide Foot](#) if you are doing lines close together. To do this you use the lines on the foot to guide your quilting.
- You can use a [walking foot](#) with guide bar.
- Or you can use [Heat Erasable Fabric Marking Pens](#) to mark lines any distance apart you want on your quilt top and then quilt on the line. When done quilting, heat press the top to make the lines disappear so they don't show from under the stitching.

To quilt, place your quilt sandwich on your machine and use one of the above methods to quilt your lines. I decided to use the marking pens and a 6" x 24" quilting ruler to draw lines for this project during Step 4 of this section.



TIP: To sew continuously, you can sew off the quilt top and onto the batting/backing so you can travel to your next line.



TIP: It is also helpful to roll the placemat so it fits better into the throat area of your machine while you quilt. Just be careful of the pins. *It's no fun to get poked!*



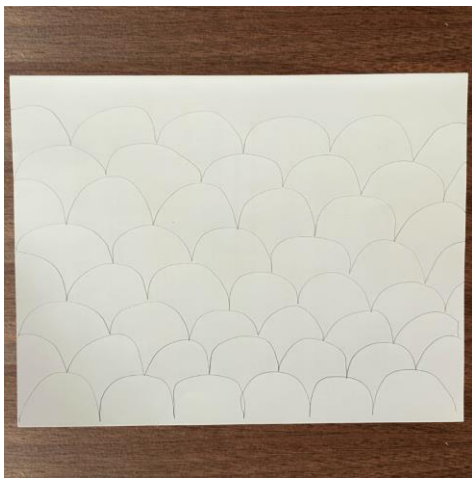
Step 8

If you want to Free Motion Quilt, lower your feed dogs or disengage them by following your sewing machine manufacturer's instructions. And change to a [free motion foot](#) (also called a darning foot).

Place your quilt sandwich under your foot and quilt. You can do wavy stitches, shells, meanders or other designs. This is your opportunity to test the quilting patterns you have always wanted to try.

If you are unsure what design you want to do, you can practice on a smaller plain quilt sandwich.

Another neat way to practice before you quilt is to doodle your quilt design on plain paper. This creates muscle memory...it's true! I did this doodling when I wanted to make a shell design on a previous quilt and it actually helped me when it came time to quilting.



If you need more information on how to use a Free Motion Foot, check out this [How to Free Quilt for Beginners](#) blog or this one on [Free Quilting](#) while using heat erasable pens and a darning foot.

Step 9

Once both of your placemats have been quilted, trim off the excess batting and backing while also straightening up your edges.



Step 10

Use the leftover backing fabric to make straight grain binding strips. I used 2" wide strips for mine as this is a smaller project so I didn't want a bigger binding. This also means that you'll be sewing a bit closer to the edges when attaching the binding as you have less width to work with. It can be a bit tricky so don't get down on yourself if your first few tries at thinner bindings are not perfect. Trust me I know from experience!

TIP: To determine how much binding you'll need, measure the circumference of your quilted placemat.

For example:

- Mine are 12" tall and 18" long. So I added $12" + 18" = 30"$...then multiplied by 2 (to account for the other two sides) so... $30" \times 2 = 60"$ and I added 5" so I can more easily connect the ends so... $60" + 5" = 65"$.
- Then, measure the width of your backing fabric, mine was 42" and divide the length of binding you need by this number.... $65 / 42 = 1.55$. So you'll need two cut strips to bind one placemat.

Before cutting your strips. Measure what you have left in the length of your backing fabric. I only had $8 \frac{1}{2}"$ left ...so I could only get four 2" strips out of it. *It's good to check this measurement before you cut your strips and make adjustments or alternate plans accordingly.*

Add your binding around the edge of each placemat using your favorite binding method.

If you need more information about binding, check out the [Beginning Quilting - Finishing with Binding](#) blog for instructions.

Only need a refresher on how to join binding...we've got you covered in the [Invisible Binding Join](#) blog.

Conclusion



You did it! You now have two quilted placemats, used up a couple of fat quarters you didn't know what to do with and it didn't take that much of your time. Just think how many little gifts you could make for family, friends or even for donation to a good cause during the holidays. And...if you want to make a little money, feel free to make a whole bunch of placemats to sell at craft fairs and such. Why not?

We'd love to see your creations so share them with us on our [Madam Sew Quilting Facebook page](#):. Let us know if you tried a new free motion quilting design and how that went. If you have any questions about this placemat tutorial, don't hesitate to leave a comment. We are happy to help you out!

Want more simple projects to try? Then, check out these Madam Sew blogs:

- Check out one of the [5 Free Quick & Easy Quilt Projects](#) when you need to make a gift fast or want to try another little project!
- Tic-Tac-Toe is a fun and simple game. Why not make a travel version perfect for camping, glamping or car trips? Just follow the [Appliqued Tic-Tac-Toe Travel Pouch](#) blog instructions.
- Does a friend, neighbor or even your family have someone in it with dementia? My vet tech's mom does and they needed something to keep mom calm whenever they were waiting at the doctor's office, etc. So, I made her mom a fidget quilt and you can too. Just check out this blog on [Making Fidget Quilts for Dementia Patients](#).

Feel free to print this blog for future reference by printing out the PDF.

Happy Quilting!

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