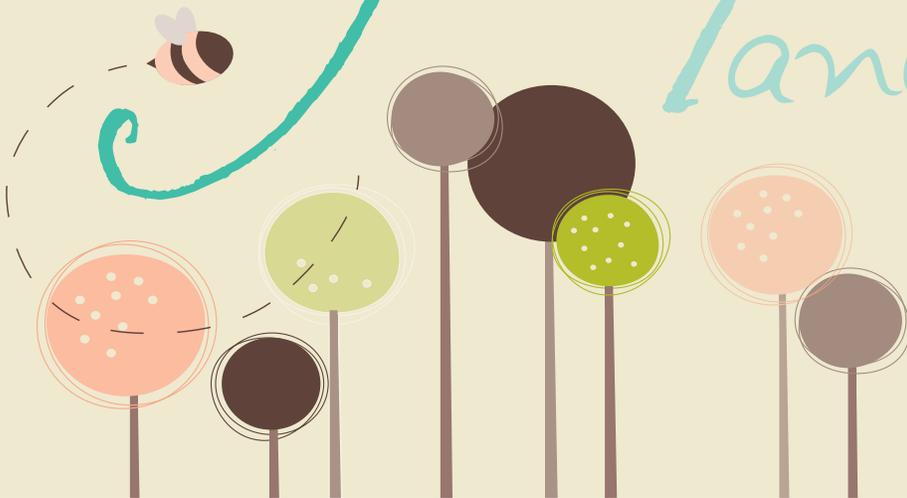


Puff Quilt Tutorial



honeybear
lane



Introduction

You have decided to make a puff quilt, congratulations! Traditionally, a puff or 'biscuit' quilt has been sewn only by hand, taking many long hours and a lot of patience to complete. I love the look of puff quilts but have no patience to hand-sew, so I came up with my own method of making a puff quilt with a border and a back.

I have made dozens of these quilts for my customers over the years and really enjoy this type of quilting. It is very different from traditional quilting; some things are easier, some things are harder. Once you make one, you will want to make more since each one turns out so darling!

Whether or not you are a beginner, intermediate, or advanced sewer, you should be able to follow this tutorial with no trouble at all! I have made it extremely comprehensive and lead you through each of the 50 steps with clear and detailed pictures as well as written instructions. I recommend that you read or skim through the entire tutorial before starting your quilt so you don't have any unexpected surprises!

This tutorial is for a baby sized puff quilt, size 36"x36". If you are looking to make a larger quilt than this, please see the end of the tutorial for help calculating dimensions.

If you ever have questions, comments, or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me at honeybearlane@gmail.com. I am so excited that you purchased this tutorial and hope you enjoy making your puff quilt as much as I do!

- heidi

List of Supplies

You will need the following fabrics and supplies to create your puff quilt:

8 fabrics for your puffs, each cut at 1/3 yard
(you can get away with 1/4 yard each but better safe than sorry.)

1 yard of border fabric

1 yard of backing fabric

1/2 yard for binding fabric

1 1/2 yards muslin (44 wide)

1/2 yard high-loft 10 ounce batting

1 yard low-loft batting

1 bag of poly-fil stuffing

Matching thread for binding, borders, and puff colors

Optional but Highly Recommended:

Rotary Cutter

Quilting Ruler

Self-Healing Mat

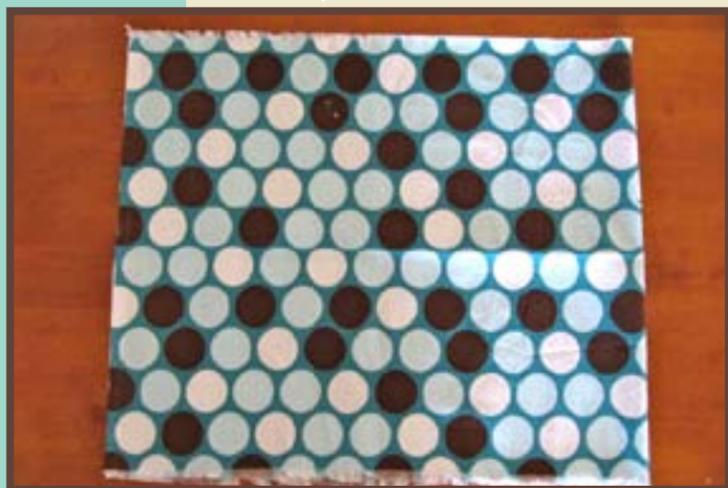
Walking Foot





Picking Your Fabric:

When you are choosing fabrics for your quilt, choose 4 colors and two fabrics in each color. Choose prints in varying 'busyness.' Choose a few very busy and loud prints, a few medium, and a few very mild and muted prints. Consider using different materials like minky, satin, corderoy. In the quilt in this tutorial, the blue/brown and orange paisley are the loud prints. The brown plaid and green polka dots are the medium, and the others are the muted/solids.



Preparing Your Fabric:

Before you cut your fabric, you should prewash it. After it's washed and dried, you may need to iron it a little to get out the wrinkles.

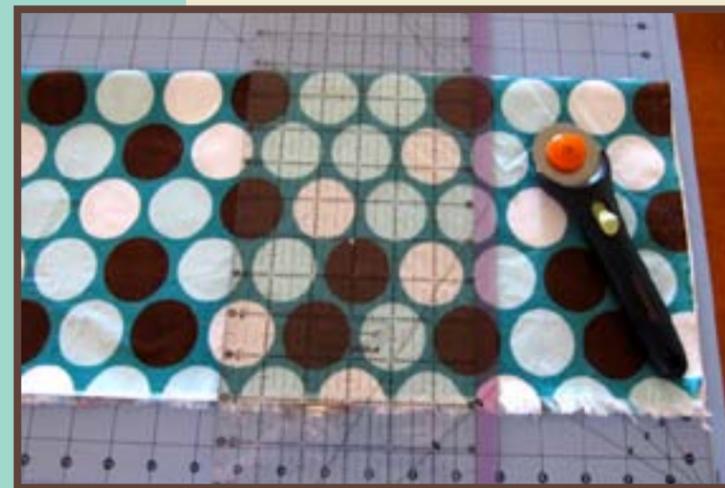
*I do not pre-wash minky, since it is polyester and doesn't shrink.



Folding Your Fabric:

After you wash it, fold your fabric in half, so the selvage sides line up. The selvages are the factory-sealed sides where the fabric won't fray. One end is white with the designer's and fabric's name.

After you match up the selvages, fold it in half 'hot dog' style.



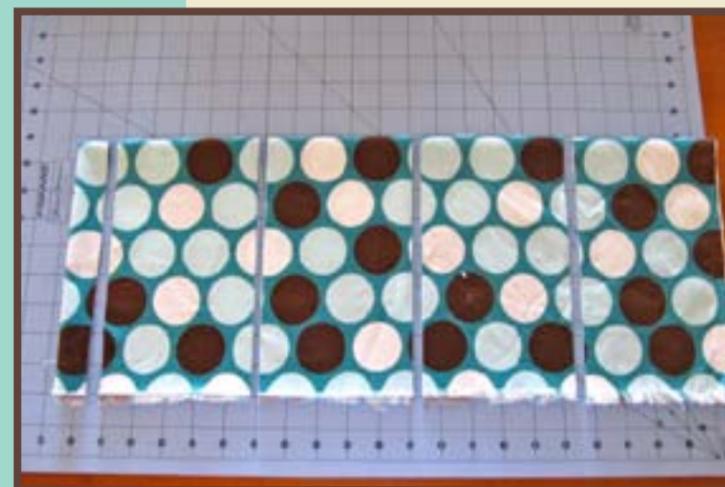
Cutting Step 1:

Using a rotary cutter, quilting ruler, and self-healing ruler mat, square up your fabric with the fold on the top and selvage on the side.



Cutting Step 2:

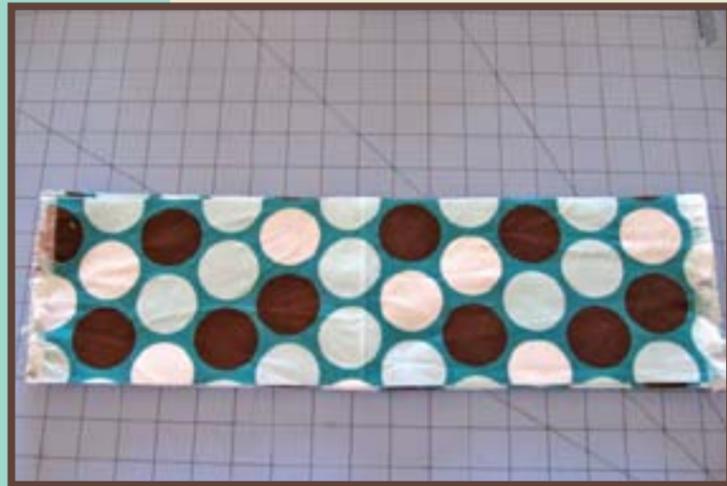
Cut a line down at 5". Move the ruler over and cut another line at the next 5".



Cutting Step 3:

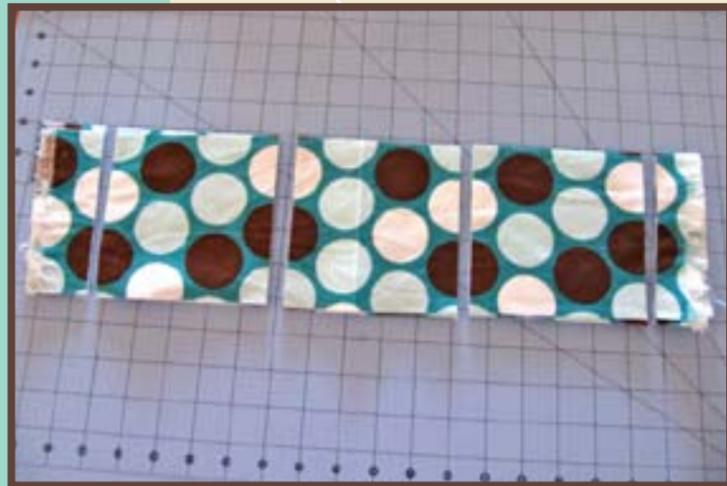
Cut the fabric vertically until you have enough pieces. For a basic 36"x36" puff quilt, you will only need 8 squares of each fabric, so cutting 1/2 yard of fabric will produce a lot more than that. You can most likely get away with 1/4 yard for this tutorial, but I recommend at least 1/3 yard to be safe.





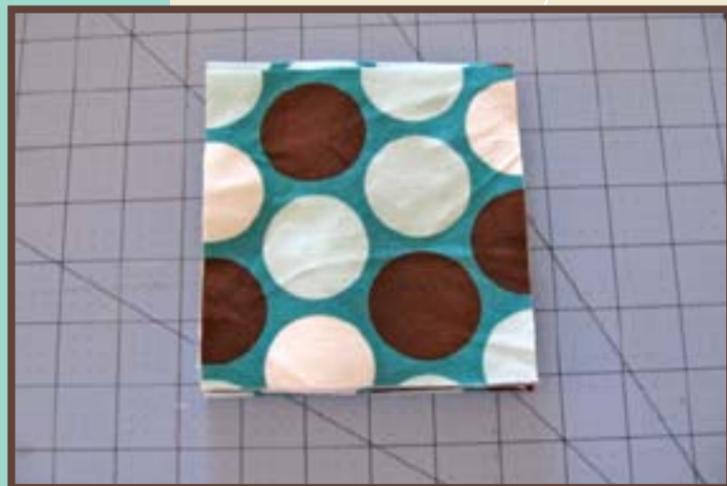
Cutting Step 4:

Open up all your cut strips and line them up together. Square up your fabric, trim any frayed or mis-matched ends.



Cutting Step 5:

Cut the strips at 5" again.



Cutting Step 6:

Now you have your 5"x5" squares!



Cutting (cont):

Repeat this with all your 8 fabrics. For this quilt, (size 36"x36") you need to have 8 squares of each of the 8 fabrics, for a total of 64 squares.



Cutting Muslin Squares:

Now do the same thing with your muslin, but cut 64 squares or however many you need.

HOWEVER: You need to cut the muslin 4 1/2"x4. 1/2" rather than 5"x5". This is very important!



Cutting (cont):

Here are all my squares, ready to go. They are all 5x5.

And here are all my muslin squares, ready to go. They are all 4 1/2 x 4 1/2.





Step 1:

To begin, you will sew 64 puffs. Lay out one of your 5x5 squares and one of your 4.5x4.5 squares.



Step 2:

Lay your muslin on top of the WRONG side of your 5x5 square. Line up one corner.

The Wrong side is the side that doesn't have the print. The RIGHT side is the side with the print. This is a very important distinction here.



Step 3:

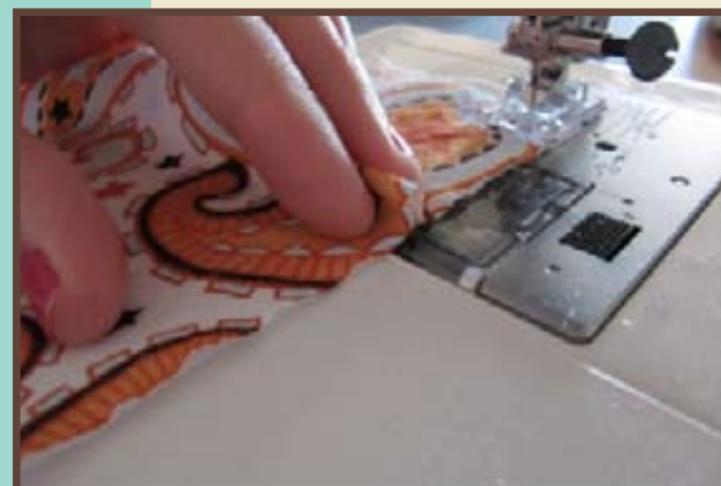
You will have to go against your normal sewing intuition here but you will be sewing the seam on the right side!

Put your two squares under your presser foot right at the spot where the two corners meet up.



Step 4:

To begin sewing, you need to line up the corners on the opposite end, as shown in the picture. Your top square will form a pucker, since it is larger.



Step 5:

Grab the pucker and pinch it between your fingers.



Step 6:

Fold the pucker down.





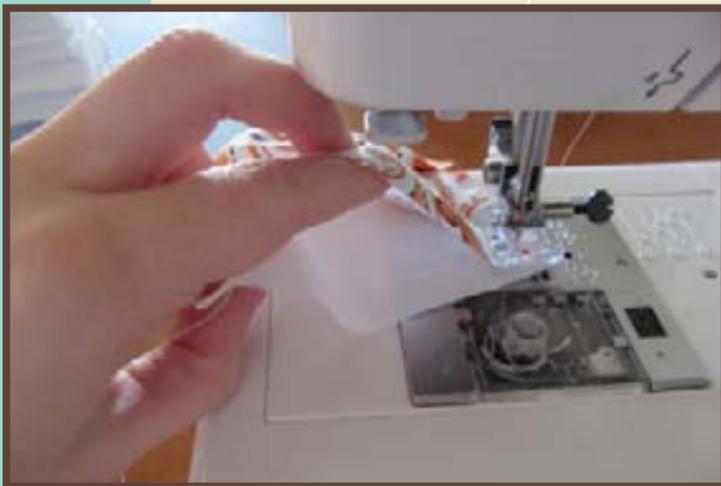
Step 7:

Now sew down the side, sewing over the puckered fold. Pivot at the corner and repeat the same thing on two more sides. Do not sew the 4th side closed.



Step 7a:

You will leave the 4th side open so you can stuff your puff!



Step 7b:

Here is the opening.



Step 7c:

You will stuff your puff with this: Poly-Fil. You can purchase this at any craft or sewing store...you can even purchase it at Walmart.



Step 7d:

Get a handful of poly-fil, about this much. Fluff it up a bit.



Step 8:

Stuff it in your little pouch.





Step 9:

Now pinch that 4th side shut and sew it closed.



Step 10:

Here is your first puff! It's actually pretty easy, right?



Step 10a:

Now you just have to do that again 63 more times!



Designing the Quilt:

Now that you've sewn all your puffs, it's time to design your quilt center. This is why I always choose four "colors", two fabrics in each color. It makes things very simple.

I will have two 'sets'. The first set is brown, green peas, orange swirls, and cream chenille. The second set coordinates with the first in the same order: blue circles (with a brown dot), green polka dots, orange paisley, and brown/cream plaid.



Designing the Quilt:

For my top row of 8, I will do set 1 followed by set 2.



Designing the Quilt:

The second row will be a little trickier: I will alternate the coordinating puff in a diagonal pattern. So adjacent to the brown is the blue/brown. Adjacent to the green pea is green polka dot. Adjacent to the orange swirl is the orange paisley. Adjacent to the cream chenille is the brown/cream plaid. They will each have a 'partner'.





Designing the Quilt:

Here is my quilt center layout: Notice how I am alternating each 'partner' along the diagonal. I love doing this pattern because it always looks great and visually interesting.

Your Walking Foot:

It is not absolutely essential to have a walking foot to sew a puff quilt. However I STRONGLY recommend having one. In addition to making it a lot easier to complete, it's much easier on your sewing machine.

Here is what my walking foot looks like (I have a Janome sewing machine.) I think they mostly look similar. They have a little lever that goes above the screw. The teeth will feed the fabric through the top like the feed dogs do underneath.

Putting on the Foot:

To put on the walking foot, remove the entire foot, using your screwdriver.



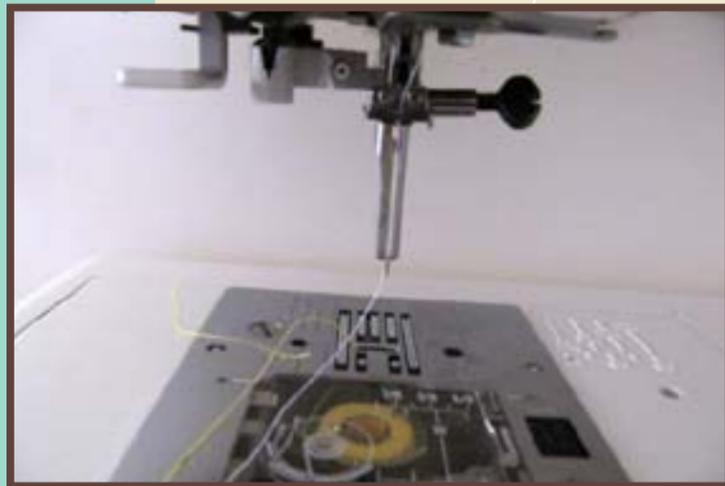
Putting on the Foot:

When you put the foot on, make sure you put the lever ABOVE the screw (mine is black). Then use your other screw (from your original foot holder) to screw in the walking foot.



Step 11:

I always start sewing my puffs together from the bottom of the quilt to the top. (because those are closest to me.) You will start by taking two puffs that are next to each other...



Step 11a:

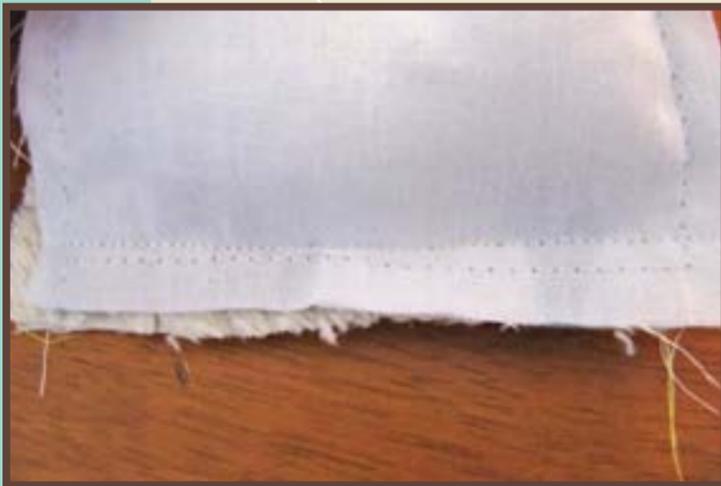
Put one puff on top of each other, lining up the sides that are supposed to be next to each other.





Step 12:

Move your needle a little to the left so that the seam will be to the left of any of your puff seams.



Step 13:

Sew the sides together. Notice how the seam is about 1/8th inch away from any of those puff seams. You need to do this so that you can't see any of those puff seams.



Step 14:

Now that those two squares are sewn together, repeat the process down the row, sewing every two together.



Step 15:

Now that every two are sewn together, you will need to sew each two together to make four.



Step 15a:

Place them on top of each other.



Step 15b:

Make sure you are pinching the right sides together so your pattern stays correct. Sew.





Step 16:

Here's what the four look like sewn together. Now you need to sew each four together.



Step 16a:

Lay the four on top of each and pinch closed the correct sides. Sew.



Step 16b:

Now you have one row sewn. Repeat all the steps to sew the rest of the rows together.



Step 17:

Sew all the rows, but not yet together. Here's what it should look like so far (this is a side view):



Step 18:

You are ready to sew the rows together.



Step 18a:

Lay the bottom two rows one on top of the other, taking note which side you need of sew.





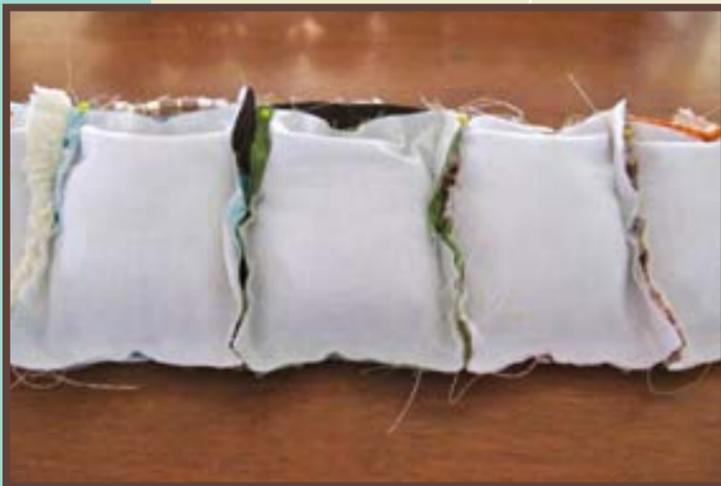
Step 18b:

To pin the two rows together, line up each intersection.



Step 18c:

And put a pin in the intersection. I like to open up the seams to spread the bulk out. And make sure your pin head is facing out, it makes it much easier to remove when sewing.



Step 18d:

Pin the rest of the intersections down the row.



Step 19:

Sew the row where you pinned, making sure to set your needle to the left so your new seam will envelope the puff seams.

You can sew slowly and stop before you reach each pin. However, if you feel more confident, you can pull out the pins a little and just sew right over them so you don't have to stop. This helps to keep the intersections lined up.



Step 19a:

And now that you've sewn your first two rows together, you've got the makings of your puff quilt! Just repeat that with another two rows, the next two above the ones you just sewed.



Step 20:

Now that you've sewn another two rows, you will need to sew those two together. I like to work in sections, it makes things easier, particularly if you are making a larger quilt.





Step 20a:

Pin your intersections just like you did before, then sew.



Step 20b:

You now have half your quilt center! Repeat this step with the other half (your remaining four rows.)



Step 21:

Now that you have two sections, you just need to finish off by sewing them together, just as you did all the other rows.



Step 21a:

Now that you've sewn all your rows together, this is what you should have! A cute and fluffy puff quilt center. Now it's time to add on the borders.



Step 22:

To create the borders, you need to cut four strips of fabric that are roughly 5"x36" out of your border fabric and then also cut four strips of the same size out of muslin.



Step 23:

Lay out your quilt center with your border fabric around it so you can clip your mitered corners.





Step 24:

Line up your fabric, overlapping one over the other.



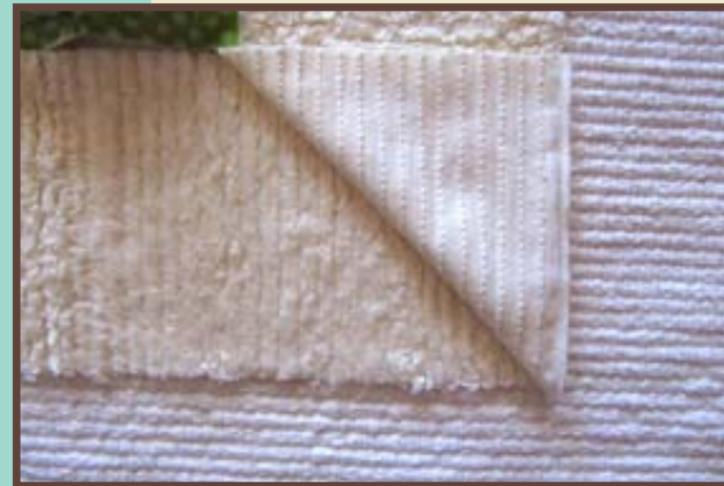
Step 24a:

Fold back the top fabric at a 90 degree angle and finger press.



Step 24b:

Cut off the triangle on the line that you fingerpressed.



Step 24c:

Repeat the same thing with the other side; folding the fabric back at a 90 degree angle, fingerpress and cut.



Step 24d:

Your cuts should overlap just slightly. Now repeat this with all corners.



Step 24e:

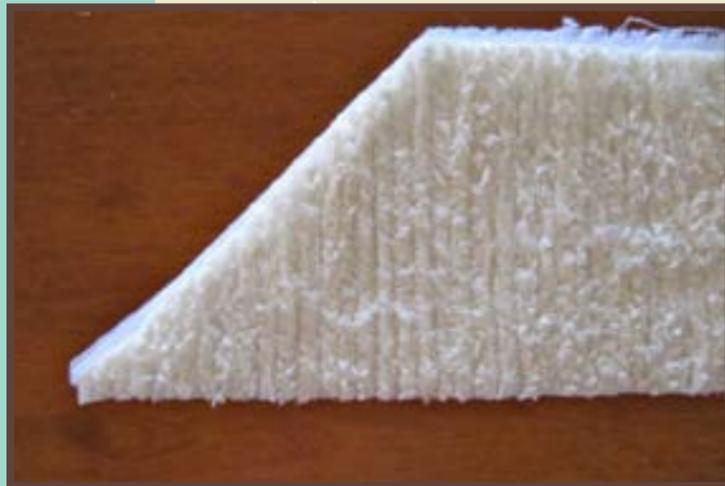
Here is what it should look like so far.





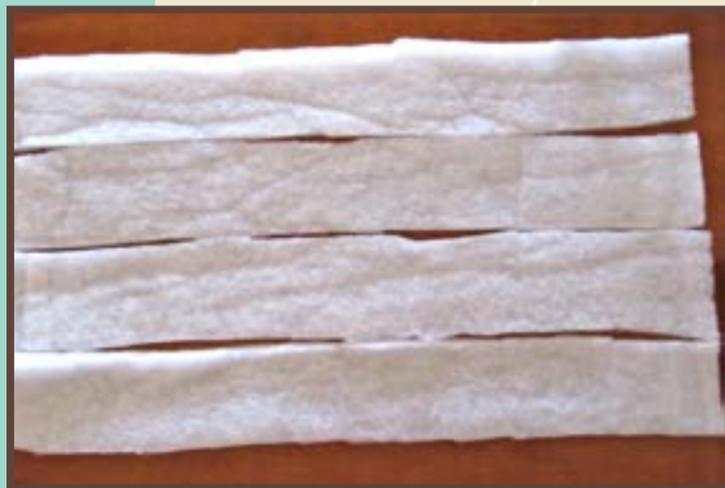
Step 25:

Lay the angled borders over top of the muslin strips.



Step 25a:

Cut off the muslin at the same angles.



Step 26:

Get your high-loft 10 oz. batting and cut it into the same size strips, 5"x36".



Step 26a:

Here is a picture of the batting, 10 oz. is the thickest batting available and it works great to match the puffiness of the puffs:



Step 26b:

Cut off the corners at an angle just as you did the border fabric and the muslin.



Step 27:

Now make a little fabric/batting/fabric sandwich. Muslin on the bottom, batting in the middle, and border fabric on top.





Step 27a:

Here's a picture up close.



Step 27b:

Put a few pins in the border piece to hold it all together.



Step 28:

Sew along the edge of the border pieces. Use the same color thread as your border fabric.



Step 28a:

Repeat the same thing and sew around all your border pieces!



Step 29:

To attach your border pieces, line up the piece on the sides that have the same length.



Step 29a:

Now flip the whole thing over because this is there you'll want to pin it.





Step 29b:

Line up the sides, each corner matching up.



Step 29c:

Pin down the corners first, then the middle.



Step 29d:

Pin down each intersection. I don't bother with opening up the seams here.



Step 30:

Sew the border on, in the same way you did all the other seams, always sewing a little to the left so as to not have your border seam show up. You can sew over the pins or remove them.



Step 30a:

Once your border piece is sewn on, it should look something like this.



Step 30b:

Repeat the same thing with the other three border pieces. Don't worry about the corners yet, that's the next part.





Step 31:

Sewing the mitered corners..



Step 31a:

To start, fold the quilt in half, diagonally.



Step 31b:

Line up the two edges of the corners and pin.



Step 31c:

Sew along the edge of the corners.



Step 31d:

Notice how that top seam meets up with your new corner seam. This is important to have in order to have a nice clean corner.



Step 31e:

Open up your corner to see how it looks. You may have to unpick it and try again if you didn't get it right, this step can be tricky.





Step 31d:

Clip off the excess bulk from your corner seam.



Step 31e:

Clip the excess off from the top view.



Step 31f:

Repeat the corner seams with the other three corners.



Step 32:

Time to attach the back. First lay out your fabric, about 38x38, right side down. Make sure you iron it first so there are no big wrinkles.

I usually purchase 1 yard of my backing fabric and don't cut it to size before I do this step. It's easier to lay the quilt on top and then trim to size.



Step 33:

Now lay your low-loft batting over the top of the backing fabric. I sometimes will use fleece or felt, depending on whether or not it's on sale.



Step 34:

Now lay your quilt top on top of the other two layers.





Step 34a:

It's great to have the backing fabric be the largest, with batting slightly smaller and the quilt top smallest. That way you don't have to worry about running out!



Step 35

Put some pins through all three layers, through the border area.



Step 36:

The first thing you're going to sew is the area where the border meets the puffs. Pull your quilt through until you get to one of the corners. If this doesn't make sense, read ahead before doing this step.



Step 36a:

This is where your needle should be. Use a thread color that is not going to show up a lot and use a bobbin thread that will match the backing. Make sure your presser foot is down! Also, lengthen your stitch and go slower.



Step 36b:

This is what happens if you ever forget to put the presser foot down! It's very easy to forget because the bulk of the quilt will confuse you into thinking it's already down!! Just unpick the mess, re-thread your machine, and go again.



Step 36c:

Here is what it should look like after you've sewn around the perimeter of the puffed center.





Step 37:

Now sew the outer edge of the quilt. You should uppin before you do this, smooth out the backing, then put your pins in again. Do the same thing that you did with the first inside seams.



Step 38:

Cut off the excess on the side, leaving about a 1/4-1/2 inch space between the seam and the edge.



Step 38a

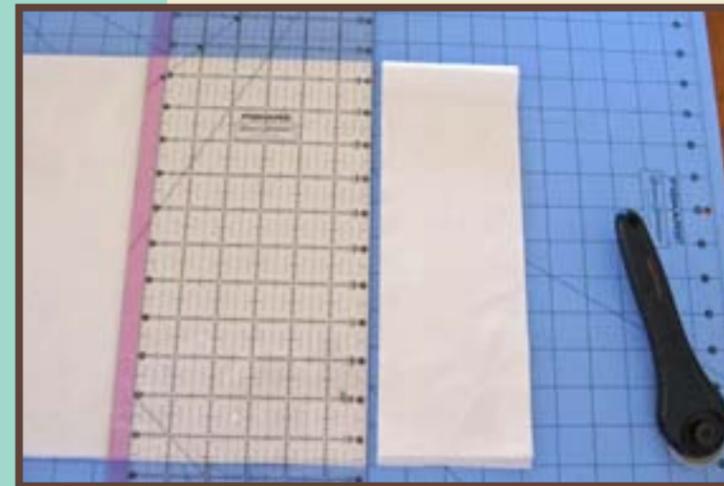
This is what your quilt should look like so far. Now we are ready to bind the quilt and tack it down. Then you'll be done!



Step 39:

Before you put on the binding, you need to make the binding. Sure, you can purchase pre-made binding but I don't recommend it. It's very stiff and pretty much a nightmare to work with, UNLESS you are binding by hand.

To make binding for a small quilt, I use this quick shortcut. Square up your fabric as if you were going to cut out more squares.



Step 39a:

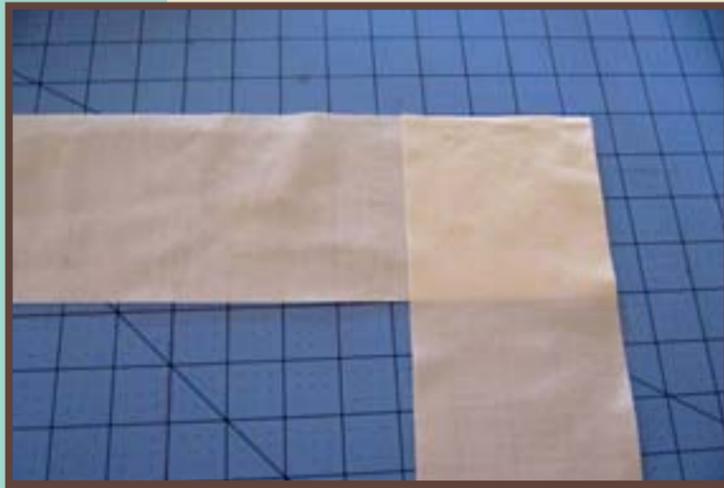
Use your ruler to cut a 4" wide strip.



Step 39b:

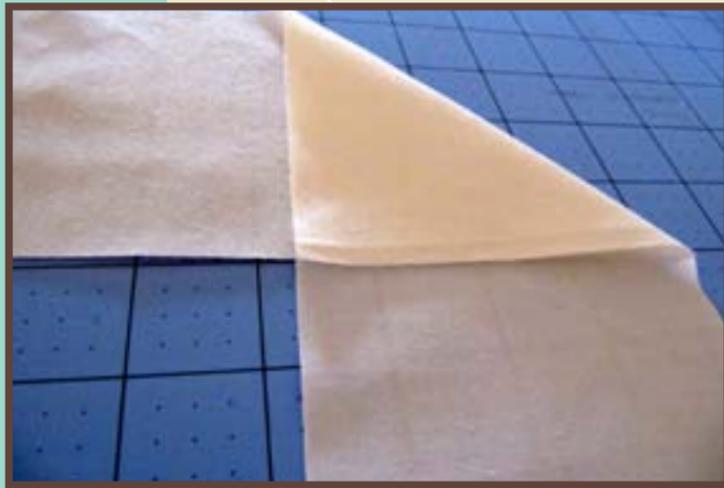
Cut 4 more of those strips. To make sure you have enough binding, calculate the complete length of the perimeter outside the quilt. For this tutorial, that would be $36" \times 4 = 144$ inches of binding. And make sure you add about 10-20 inches just to be safe.





Step 40:

To create a nice diagonal seam on your binding strips, lay them right sides together perpendicular to each other, as shown in the picture.



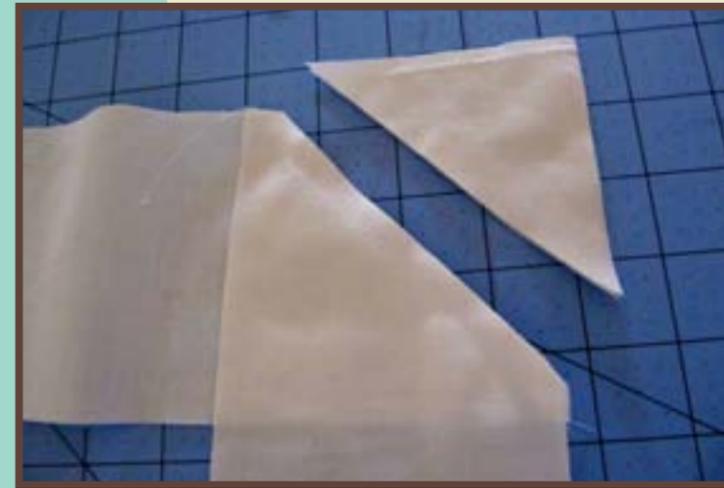
Step 40a:

Fold over the corner at a 90 degree angle and finger press.



Step 40b:

Open up your fold and sew on the finger-pressed seam.



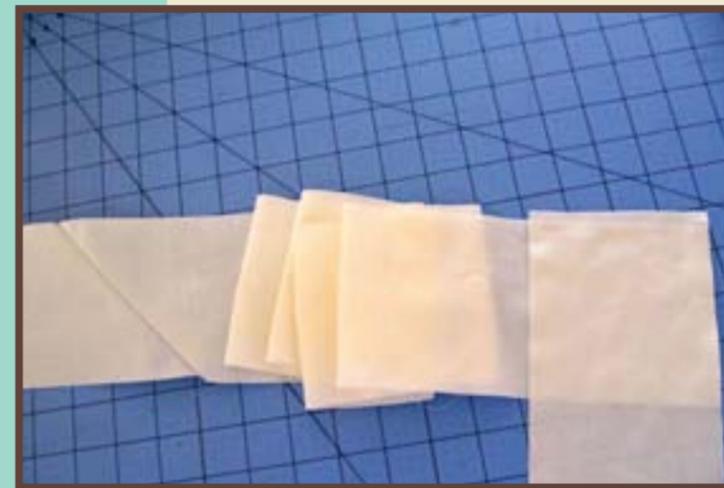
Step 40c:

Clip off the corner.



Step 40d:

Open it up and see your pretty diagonal seam.



Step 40e:

Sew the rest of the strips together in the same way, always doing right sides together. If you are using a fabric that doesn't have an apparent right/wrong side, make sure you line it up as shown in the picture so you remember which side is the right side.





Step 41:

Iron open all your binding seams.



Step 41a

Now iron the entire long strip of fabric in half, taking care that the seams are all inside.



Step 41b:

This is what your binding should look like!



Step 42:

To pin it on the quilt, line up the raw edges (not the folded side) with the quilt's side. Leave a tail and put a pin in it.



Step 42a:

Now start to pin the binding all the way around. I always pin my binding on because if I don't it comes out very twisted.



Create a Mitered Corner:

To create a mitered corner, you take the binding down to the corner, then fold it out as shown. Make sure the raw edge of the binding lines up with the edge of the quilt.





Mitered Corners (cont):

Now put your fingers on the corner to hold the fold there and bring the tail back towards you. Make sure the raw edge of the binding still lines up with the edge of the quilt.



Mitered Corners (cont):

Now you will have a little triangle fold that sticks out. Grab that triangle...



Mitered Corners (cont):

...and fold it down as shown in the picture.



Step 42b:

Finish pinning the rest of your binding down around the quilt. Leave a tail at the end; we'll attach them together later.



Step 43:

Now put your needle down after the first pin. You have to leave a tail so it's possible to join the two binding tails together. I move my needle to the left and sew lining my presser foot up with the edge of the quilt.



Step 43a:

When you reach your mitered corner, just sew approximately 1/4 inch to the edge, then stop. Lift up your presser foot AND your needle...





Step 43b

...Grab that triangle of fabric...



Step 43c:

...Flip that folded triangle back...



Step 43d:

...And put your presser foot and needle back, turning the quilt to begin sewing the next side. Repeat that with every corner.



Step 44:

Once you've sewn around most of the quilt, stop quite a fair distance before your first tail. I actually was cutting it pretty close in this quilt, but it's much easier if you leave long tails that aren't sewn down.



Step 44a:

Open up the two tails.



Step 44b:

Line up the tails, right sides together and find the spot where you need to sew for the binding to fit snugly on the quilt.





Step 44c:

Put a pin in that spot to mark it.



Step 44d:

Now finagle the fabric so that you can sew where your pin is. Are your tails right sides together? Do your best here, it can be tricky.



Step 44e:

This is what your seam will look like from the top.



Step 45:

Fold your binding over so the folded edge goes on the back. This is what your mitered corners look like when you fold the binding back.



Step 46:

I pin the binding on the back, making sure that my pin heads are on the right with the pin poking left. This will ensure that you can remove the pins as you are sewing the binding.



Step 46a:

When you come to your corner, you will need to work with it to make it look the way you like. Fold one side down, then the other side up.





Step 46b:

Now your corners will look neat and pretty.



Step 47:

To sew the binding on the back, you are going to stitch in the ditch on the top. This is a very tricky process with a puff quilt, so go slow, check your work often, and don't be afraid to unpick. Great bindings take time.



Step 48:

Once your binding is sewn, you are nearly done! It should look like this from the top.



Step 48a:

And this from the backside.



Step 49:

To tack down your quilt, thread a thicker embroidery needle with same color embroidery thread. Do NOT tie a knot at the end.



Step 49a:

I generally sew a knot in the intersection, going down two puffs at a time.





Step 49b:

Poke your needle through the top...



Step 49e:

Poke the needle back up to the top.



Step 49c:

...And come out the back. Pull nearly all the way through..



Step 49f:

Leaving a little stitch about this big on the other side.



Step 49d:

Leave a tail about three inches long on the other side.



Step 49g:

Clip the thread and needle off, leaving about three inches so you are left with two pieces like this.





Step 49h:

Now tie the two strings together in a square knot. Clip off the remaining string.



Step 50:

NOW you are finished!!! Clip all the remaining threads you might see, dust off all the extra bits of fluff and strings.



Step 50a:

This is what the back will look like...



Step 50b:

And here is the view from the front!



Finished!

Go test out your new puff quilt on your baby (or you!)



Finished!

...And be sure to show everyone you can! These are so fun to make, so soft and plush.

They are completely machine washable, just make sure to tumble dry immediately after washing.



Formula To Make a Custom-Sized Quilt

Average Quilt Sizes; Dimensions in Inches

Twin: 68x88

Full: 86x88

Queen: 90x92

King: 100x92

To calculate how many puffs you will need, use the following:

X = Number of Puffs Wide

$$(Width/3.5) - 2 = X$$

Y = Number of Puffs Long

$$(Length/3.5) - 2 = Y$$

You are dividing by the size of the puff once it's puffed and sewn to the other puffs, which comes out to be 3.5 inches, approximately. You subtract 2 from that if you want to include a border. If you don't, don't subtract 2.

Example:

Twin size bed quilt measures 68 inches wide by 88 inches long.

$$(68/3.5) - 2 = 18$$

$$(88/3.5) - 2 = 24$$

That means you will need the quilt to be 18 puffs wide by 24 puffs long. Multiply those two numbers by each other. So you will need 432 puffs to make a twin size quilt. That's a lot of puffs! And...that's why I only do crib size. But if you want to take on a larger size, kudos! I would love to see pictures!

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