

cloth napkins



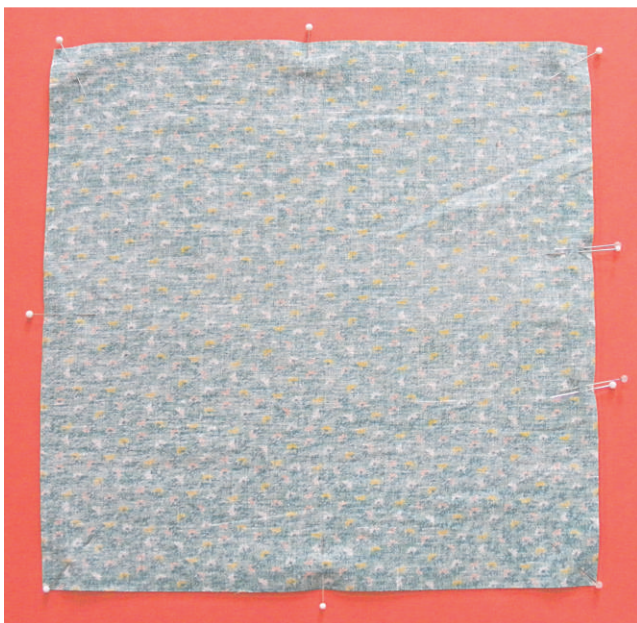
shiny happy world

Stitch up a stack of cloth napkins. They're eco-friendly and they make every meal feel like you're eating at a fancy restaurant. Make them all from the same fabric for a formal set, or choose different fabrics to match the personalities of every member of your family. Each napkin will have two sides - so feel free to mix and match your fabrics for a fun effect. I like to use a print for one side, and a coordinating solid for the reverse.

For each napkin you'll need:

- Two squares of fabric. Mine are 12 inches square but you can make yours a little larger or smaller if you like.
- sewing machine
- thread
- iron

Ready? Let's sew!



Step 1

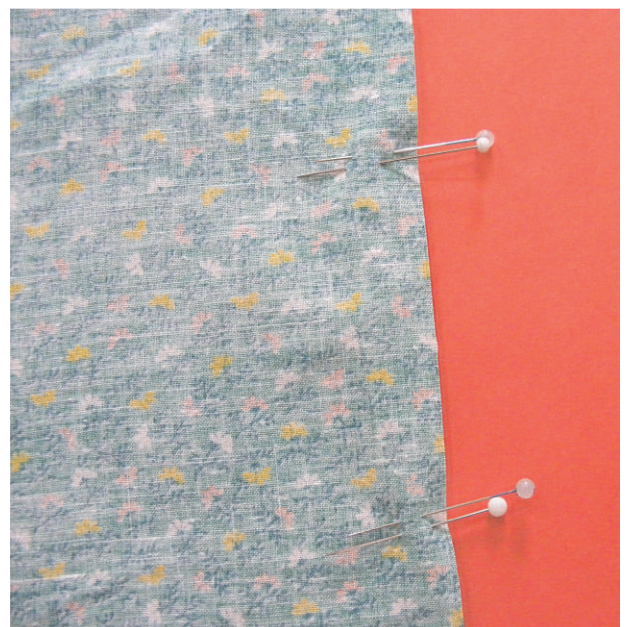
Iron your fabric so it's nice and smooth.

Stack the two squares of fabric with their right sides together and their edges lined up. The napkin should be "inside-out."

Pin the two layers together around the edges.

Step 2

Leave an opening of at least 3 inches so you can turn the napkin right-side-out after stitching. I like to mark the beginning and end of my opening with double pins so I remember not to sew it closed.





Step 3

Using 1/4 inch seam allowance, stitch all around the edge of the napkin - **except for the part you're leaving open.**

Remember to backstitch a few stitches at the beginning and end of your stitching.

The opening should look like this.

Step 4

And your corners should look like this.

If you need help with your seam allowance or turning corners, watch [this video](#).



Step 5

Trim away excess fabric at each corner. This will help make your corners nice and flat when you turn the napkin right-side-out.

Be careful not to cut through your stitches - your cut should be just a little bit out from the corner of your stitching. See the picture?

Step 6

Turn your napkin right side out. Use a chopstick (or some other pointy, but not too pointy tool) to help pop the corners all the way out.

Smooth everything out and carefully press all the seams. Take your time and make the sides as square as possible,





Step 7

The unstitched edges of your opening should fold in pretty perfectly all by themselves, but give them some help if you need to. They should look like this.

Step 8

When you get the edges folded and lined up so they look just right, press them nice and flat.

They should look like this.



Step 9

Now stitch all the way around the edge, very close to the edge of the napkin. This is called topstitching. Every corner should be nice and square and this stitching will seal up the opening you used for turning. Easy peasy!

Trim your threads and press your napkin one more time. That last pressing will help the threads of your topstitching sink down into the fabric and look nice and finished.



You're finished! Sit down and have a snack - using your new napkin, of course - and then make as many more as you want. This is a great way to use up scrap fabric - in my house we have a huge pile of mismatched napkins and we each have our favorites. There are napkins with aliens, bunnies, beetles, and tropical fish. There are striped, polkadot, checkerboard, and crossword puzzle napkins.

If you want to get really fancy you could embroider the initials of a family member on each napkin. **Before** you sew the layers together, draw the initial on the corner of the napkin - **not too close to the edge!** Remember, 1/4 inch will disappear into the seam allowance! Use any of the outline stitches you'll find in the [embroidery school](#) to stitch the letter. Then sew it up following the regular instructions.



Happy sewing!