



March 23, 2020

Yes we are open!

I've got to admit I wake up in the morning forgetting what is going on - like it was just a dream or a book that I read. And then I turn on the television.

But between some news watching, I have seen some fun things: The movie Poms, about retired/senior/way too old women forming a cheerleading squad at a retirement facility. It's fun and uplifting.

I've also watched Mrs. Wilson, a PBS 3-part true story about a woman married to a spy during WWII and after (or maybe not married to the spy?). This was good but not particularly cheerful.

I've finished watching The Durrells of Corfu, which was oddly engaging about a family that moves from England to Corfu in the late 1930s. I gotta admit that while it was entertaining, funny, and hopeful, this family is a bit strange. It is based on the youngest son's (Gerald Durrell) book, "My Family and Other Animals."

However, while you're stuck at home, please don't do any of the following things: Watch the movies Outbreak, Contagion, any of the Walking Dead shows, the Andromeda Strain, 12 Monkeys, Cabin Fever, Resident Evil, 28 Days Later, Carriers, or read books like Origin by Dan Brown, anything by Justin Cronin (probably, I haven't read him but he does disaster books), The Stand by Stephen King, Station Eleven by Emily St. John Mandel (which actually sounds good, but not right now), and On the Beach by Nevil Shute. It's just not worth it.

I am reading a series by Alan Bradley about an 11-year-old girl, Flavia, who helps solve mysteries. It is set between the wars in a small English town. She's very much into chemistry and if you want to know how to poison anyone, she'll give you tips. Well, she doesn't actually poison anyone, although she has doctored chocolates in order to make her sister sick-but she

really can't go through with that, either.

We will remain open as long as it is allowed. We are wiping down regularly. We will limit the number of customers in the store. I can take orders by phone and when you get here either call me or honk or knock on the door and I will bring your fabrics to you. At the end of the day, I can also drive them to you. I've had other volunteers who will also drive items to you.

Please bring your completed masks back to the store as soon as you can. I will continue to make kits, with either elastic as ties or cloth ties (see modification to pattern below). The first round of masks was successful. We have delivered 100+ in the community as of today. So there is a need for what we are doing.

Pattern Modifications

You can find multiple versions of masks on line. And everyone has an opinion on what is best. And all versions of masks work and all advice is good.

So you know, my pattern came from a hospital in Washington - it's what they wanted and suggested. I modified the instructions to make it easier to sew. It doesn't have a filter between the layers, it doesn't have metal for a bridge across the nose, it doesn't have a tuck at nose level to accommodate the nose or an N-95 mask, and it doesn't have an opening so you can stuff a layer of filtration in between the two pieces of cotton.

But it is easy to sew & only takes about 10 minutes, tops. And it works. And, even without a tuck for the nose, it still fits over an N-95 mask just fine--we tried it. Is it perfect? No. Does it still work? Yes. Is it quick? Yes.

But, you can adapt the pattern as needed, depending on where you are sending your masks. If you are bringing your masks back to the store, the 2 layer, elastic tie masks have been requested. They are fast and easy to make.

If, however, you have someone requesting masks from you and they want to add more things to the basic mask, please feel free to make modifications. We've had a donation of pipe cleaners that can be cut & used for a nose bridge. If you want some, I will have them cut & ready for you to take.

If you want to try putting pellon interfacing as a third layer in between the cotton, I will have some cut for you that you can grab. If you want to put ties on the masks, instead of elastic, we are making ties and I'll have them ready

for you as well. The ties take a little more time to make, so be patient. We may not be able to keep you with the demand.

Modification #1:

Adding a third layer. Place the third layer either on the bottom or the top of your mask, when sewing around for the first time. Remember your main fabrics are placed right sides together with the elastic trapped between. Place the third layer on top or on the bottom when you stitch around. When you turn the mask inside out, the third layer will be in between.

Modification #2:

Ties. The easy way is to treat the ties just like the elastic. (See original pattern) Pin one tie in each of the 4 corners. Stitch around, turn inside out, make your pleats and top stitch twice around. These ties should be app. 15-20 inches long to provide enough length for a good tie. Ties are cut at 1 ¼"-1 ½" inches, fold edges into center, (press) fold in half one more time to the center to hide all the raw edges, (press) and then stitch down right through the middle of the tie. You can be fussy about the ends and tuck the raw edges to the inside if you want.

This method, though, is not as secure as stitching the ties right onto the mask. If you want to sew the tie to the mask, you will need two strips, width of fabric (42 inches) cut at 1 ¼"-1 ½". Fold edges in toward center, (press) then fold in half one more time and press. Do not sew yet.

Mask preparation is a little different for this version: Sew side seams of mask only and turn inside out. Make your pleats in the same way and double stitch on the sides to secure.

Then you are going to sew the tie to the mask just like you sew the binding on the quilt, only this is a single fold not double fold binding. So once you've pressed the tie, open it back up (you still have the edges folded into the center) Find the center of the tie and pin to the center of the mask and stitch on one side from mask edge to mask edge--you've got the raw edge of the long edge of the mask butted up against one folded edge of the tie. Repeat for the other side.

Then fold the tie over the long edge of the mask, just like you would do with binding on the quilt. Now stitch the entire length of the tie, all 42" of it. This tie is very secure and will not pull out. But this takes more time to sew. I do not have pictures of this yet but I will have an example in the store.

Modification 3:

Adding pipe cleaner to the nose bridge. I only have suggestions for this modification. Take the pipe cleaner and place in between the layers after you

have turned the mask inside out. When you do your first top stitching, use the pipe cleaner width as the distance you sew from the edge. If you have the correct foot, you could try zig zagging across the pipe cleaner to keep it in place.

Modification 4:

Cut the fabrics at 9 1/2" X 9 1/2". Make a tuck on the top & bottom (where your nose would go). Then make the mask as usual, using ties rather than elastic. This mask takes much more time.

The Cheyenne Regional Foundation will be releasing guidelines for protective equipment tomorrow. I will add their requirements to the masks that we are making, so if there are specifics that we can do, I'll let you know.

For now, though, we have given out 100 masks (maybe a few more), so what we are sewing are being used, will be used in the future and are needed - not in all areas, but in many.

Thank you for all of your efforts and contributions. We are a strong and giving community because of you.

Basic Protective Mask Pattern

Fabric Requirements:

2 pieces of quilting fabric 6" X 9"

2 pieces of 1/4" - 1/2" elastic 7" (the half inch is a bit big. You can trim it if necessary)
(7.5 X 5 for child)



Step 1: Place fabrics right sides together.

Step 2: Starting on right side, place elastic in between the two layers and butt the edge of elastic into the upper corner and pin in place. Take the other end of elastic and pin in the bottom corner, making sure not to twist the elastic. Repeat for the left side. The elastic must be in between the two layers-not sticking out from the edges.

Step 2: Pin around.

Step 3: Start sewing on a long side, starting just off the middle. Sew all the way around, leaving a gap for turning. Make sure you only catch the elastic in the corners of the mask.

Step 4: Turn. You should now have a mask! But there's one more part.

Step 5: Take 3 tucks/pleats on each of the short sides. The tucks are about 1" each (1/2" behind, 1/2" on top). Make sure the tucks go in the same direction and make sure they are approximately evenly pleated on both sides. Pin tucks in place.

Step 6. Top Stitch around the entire outside edge of the mask. This stitching will close off the gap where you turned and stitch the tucks in place. Stitch one more time, right next to your first stitching.

You're done!

NOTE: We will also have a pattern that uses ties rather than elastic. Stay tuned.



Step By Step Pictures

Pin elastic into corners, keeping elastic to the inside



Put remaining fabric, on top, rights sides down. Pin in corners to secure elastic.



Begin in the middles of the long side. When you get to the corner, leave needle down, lift pressure foot, and turn fabric.



Stop stitching about 2" from where you started.



Turn. You can see my hole at the top.



Start your tucks!



Start top stitching. I stitch right over my pins. You can also pin with the head facing inside and the tip of the pin 1/4 inch away from your edge.

That way you can stitch without stitching over the pins or taking them out too soon.

One More Thing

Jo Sunderman, Key Designs, is offering to do fancy (computerized) quilting for the price of simple meandering, \$1/inch, measured by the short side of you quilt. For example if your quilt is 65" X 80" your price is \$65. Her offer is good through June 1, 2020 and only if you buy your batting from Around the Block. We have 80/20 in stock and wool.

Join the fun and come feel the difference of quality fabrics.

Happy quilting!

Sincerely,

Barbara Boyer
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