

Everyone's a Kid Floor Cushions and Toss Pillows

Featuring Space Pals and SuperFred from Michael Miller Fabrics

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Fabrics are from the Michael Miller Fabrics SuperFred line (prints 2020) and Cotton Couture (Basics, always available)

These cushions are destined for my daughter-in-law's Kindergarten classroom, so I have added materials and construction details to make them extra sturdy. Our pug has tested and approved them for comfort.

Fabric and materials requirements for two 24" square floor pillows and two 14x20" toss pillows:

Preshrink all fabrics!

NOTE: Yardage is to make two floor and two toss pillows. Cutting and construction details show measurements and how to make **each** pillow.

- o Focus Fabric 1: Space Pals Black 3/4 yard (will yield two 19" center squares)
- o Focus Fabric 2: SuperFred Grey 3/4 yard (will yield two 19" center squares)
- o Solids:
 - o Yellow 1/2 yard
 - o Apricot 1/2 yard
 - o Acid 1/2 yard
 - o Lilypad 1/2 yard
 - o *OPTION: you can use the same fabric for all of the sides if you prefer*
- o Boxing / sides fabric: Galactic Black 2 yards

- o Two Heavy duty zippers 48" or longer. Note: if you can't find a pre-made zipper this long or zipper tape plus pull, you can use two 24" zippers that meet in the center back OR use a shorter 36" zipper (which just makes inserting the cushion a bit more work). If you use a shorter zipper, adjust the length of the gusset strips, making the plain front one longer, and the two portions of the zippered section shorter. I find that zippers with molded plastic teeth to be more durable than heavy coil zippers for seat cushions. You can find zipper tape and pulls to make custom length online including at Amazon. I used a #5 zipper—the weight found on jackets, not the very bulky one for sleeping bags.
- o Sewing thread
- o Decorative thread
- o Interfacing: 6 yards fusible, medium to heavy weight—to reinforce the fabric—optional but a good idea if these will get a lot of use and you're using lighter weight fabric
- o 24" square foam cushion that is 4" deep; I purchased a 24x72 inch roll of foam from Joann's. Cut (be careful to keep the blade vertical) with a bread knife or skinny saw with a long thin blade. Cut into three 24" squares; I used two of the three.
- o Dacron upholstery wrap to cover foam for floor cushions
- o 14 x 20" rectangular toss pillows

- o *Optional:* Spray glue for adhering Dacron to foam (you can whip-stitch the Dacron together by hand if you prefer)
- o *Optional:* Polyester webbing for handle. Scraps of denim or other sturdy fabric for reinforcing where you sew the handles to the cushion.
- o *Optional:* large plastic bag (leaf bag, dry cleaner's bag) to help slide the cushion into the covering

Other Useful Stuff:

Zipper foot or narrow 1/4" foot

Optional but recommended:

- o edge-stitch foot with edge guide or quarter-inch foot with edge guide
- o Overcast foot
- o Machine with overcast stitch, zigzag stitch or a serger

Floor Cushion Cutting:

For EACH floor cushion (if making two as I did, double the amounts listed below):

Focus fabric:

- o cut two 19" squares, one of each focus print (one print for one side, the other for the other side)

Solid fabrics:

- o cut TWO strips 4" x 23" from each of the four solids, total 8 strips

Gusset (boxing strip) fabric:

- o Cut one strip 5" x 60." You may piece this, but I preferred to cut on the lengthwise grain.
- o Cut one strip 3" x 48" for lower zippered section
- o Cut one strip 5" x 48" for upper zippered section

Floor Cushion Construction:

Place interfacing fusible side up on your ironing surface. Place your fabric pieces right side up on top of the interfacing and fuse according to manufacturer's instructions. Cut apart, trimming to the raw edge of the fabric. If your cushions will be more decorative rather than used a lot, you may omit the interfacing.

Use ½" seam allowances!!!!!!

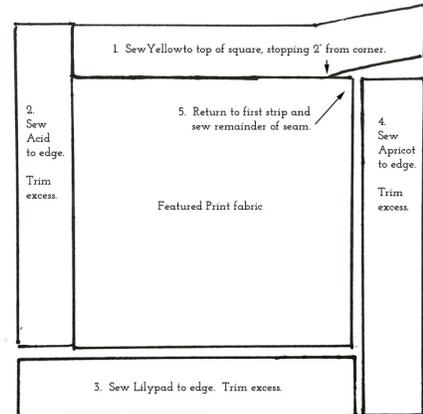
For piecing the 24" tops/bottoms and sewing the zipper, use a regular straight stitch for assembly.

Optional: since I feel the cushions I made will be washed fairly often due to classroom use, I also used an overcast stitch (or serge if you have a serger) on the edge of all seams. Be sure to use a thread that will not shadow through—guess how I learned that one. Ahem. Photos at right. Let's pretend I used black instead of white so it shows in the photo. Right. Be smarter than me.



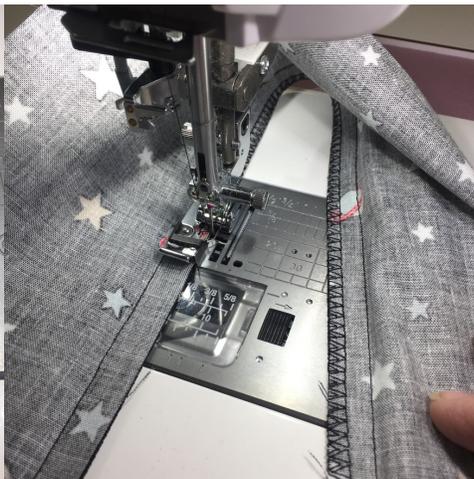
Make the tops and bottoms:

1. Sew the solids to the focus fabric squares. See diagram at right. On the first side, match the short end of the strip with the edge of the square. Stop sewing about 2 inches away from the bottom edge of the square; you will complete this seam once all the other solid strips are attached. If desired, follow my sequence of colors by referring to the photo. I started sewing with the yellow at the top. I sewed all the yellow seams first.
2. Next, I used an overcast stitch alongside the straight-stitch seam on the solid/yellow. Press the solid strip away from the center.
3. Sew the second side next, matching the top and sewing all the way down on all of the front/back squares. Then overcast the edges and press away from the center.
4. Repeat for the third and fourth sides.
5. Complete the first edge by sewing from where you began to the outside edge, then overcast stitch and press.
6. Sew about 3/8" from the seamline to secure the seam allowances to the solid sashing. This is both decorative and functional: it prevents the seam allowances from twisting around and it reinforces and strengthens the piecing.

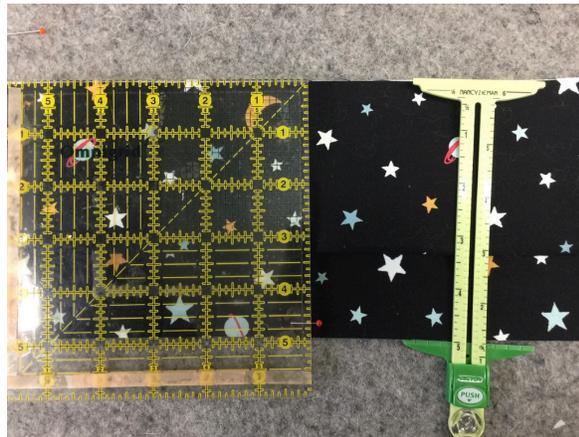


Make the zipper gusset:

7. Sew the zipper tape to the 3" x 48" strip which will be the bottom of the zipper gusset. Sew about 1/8" or a bit more away from the zipper teeth. If your sewing machine allows, place the left edge of the zipper foot against the teeth; this will help you get a perfect distance and seam. When you have sewn about 12", doublecheck that the zipper pull has enough room to move! Photo below left.
8. Use the overcast stitch or a serger to secure the raw edge of the fabric to the zipper tape. Photo below center.



9. Press the fabric away from the zipper teeth. Don't MELT the zipper teeth!
10. Edgestitch next to the seam. Photo previous page, bottom right. My zipper foot has indentations on both sides plus an opening in the center. Previously, I moved the needle to the left indentation to sew the zipper to the cloth. Next, I placed the edge of the zipper foot next to the teeth as before, but used the center opening for the edge-stitching. By snugging the zipper foot next to the zipper teeth, you get a more precise seam line.
11. Next, use the overcast stitch (not a straight stitch) to sew the edge of the 5" x 48" strip to the other size of the zipper.
12. At the ironing board, you will press the flap so that the entire gusset finishes at 5" wide. This will form a deep overlap which will lay flat and not bulge outwards. You may wish to use an air-erasable marker (or pin some yarn into the ironing surface or mark two lines 5" apart on a piece of paper which you pin to the ironing surface).



Top row left: creating deep zipper placket. Top row right, use a ruler and/or hem gauge to make sure the placket and overall width of the zipper gusset remain consistent.

Bottom row left: press fold. Bottom row right: shows pins on the edge of the placket (fingertips under placket) as well as back side of the zipper tape.

13. Turn the entire gusset over so it is wrong side up. Pin the upper-side zipper tape to the fabric, making sure that the gusset is still 5" wide. See bottom row right photo, above.
14. Use a straight stitch to sew the tape to the fabric. Sew 1/8 to 1/4" away from the edge of the zipper tape.

Assemble the gusset/boxing strip

15. With right sides together, sew the 5" gusset strip that goes around the front edge of the cushion to the 5" zipper gusset with a 1/2" seam on one end. Be careful not to stitch into the plastic zipper teeth! You may wish to sew a very wide zigzag or sew by hand to around the plastic teeth to strengthen the seam so the zipper pull doesn't damage the seam.
16. Overcast the ends of the 5" seam. Sew to just before the zipper teeth, then raise the needle and presser foot and move to the far side of the zipper teeth before you continue stitching. Photo below left.



17. Fold the front gusset so that it forms a 2" deep pocket over the zipper gusset. Baste in place by machine 1/4" from the raw edge. Photo above left. To reinforce the seam, I used the triple-straight stitch, center and right photos above. Be sure not to stitch into the plastic zipper teeth. Just move the presser foot to the other side of the plastic. Hand walk the needle on th first stitch to be sure it doesn't hit the plastic.
18. Photos below show the outside of the zipper "garage."



19. Repeat on the other end of the zipper gusset, but pin this zipper garage for the moment.
20. Mark the corners of the entire gusset: you want a SNUG fit!
 - a. find the center of the front gusset and mark it with a pin. Photo below left.
 - b. Mark with a pin 12" to either side of the center to establish where the corners are.
 - c. Mark with a pin 24" away from the front corner pins to establish the rear corners
 - d. Adjust depth of second zipper garage; sew. Photo below right.
 - e. Optional but recommended: stitch to reinforce the corners 3/8" from the raw edges.

Photos are on next page.



21. Clip in 3/8" at the corner pins, stopping just short of the reinforcing stitching.
22. Pin the gusset to one side of the cushion cover and sew with 1/2" seam allowance. I found it easier to pin accurately by placing the cover on the cushion, photo at right. I first sewed my seam with a longer stitch length, then test-fit it to the cushion. It WILL be SNUG (that makes a better looking cushion cover)!

Because I expect my cushions to be enthusiastically used in the classroom, I opted to sew the final seam with a triple-straight-stitch to make a stronger seam. See photo for this stitch at no. 10, above.



23. Repeat with the second side; be sure that the zipper is open at least enough to get your hand inside!

Sewing corners can be tricky—the images below show from left to right: Photo 1—Sew up to the corner stitching so that the reinforcing stitching from step 20 (e) is just inside in the



seam allowance. Stop with needle down. Photo 2—your gusset may get pleated under the foot; lift the foot and wiggle it out of the way. Photo 3—pivot at the corner. Photo 4—continue stitching on the second side, making sure fabric edges are aligned and that you aren't accidentally sewing a tuck into the seam. Larger photos are on my March 12, 2020 blogpost.

24. Overcast the edges of the seams.
25. Press seams as stitched. Press toward the gusset.
26. Turn the cushion cover right side out and admire your handiwork!

Stuffing the cushion

27. Administer a bit of chocolate or your favorite (perhaps potent) potable—you're almost done!
28. Wrap a piece of plastic or large garbage bag around one side of the cushion. Do NOT put the cushion inside the bag... you need to be able to pull the plastic out. Photo below left.



29. Open the zipper all the way and slide / wrestle that cushion into the cover. Slide the plastic out. Photo above center.
30. Coax the foam into the corners so that the seams are on the edges of the foam cushion. Sometimes running your hand over the outside to smooth fabric in the correct direction helps.
31. Zip closed. I like to put a couple fingers on the inside to keep the dacron wrap out of the way of the zipper teeth. Tuck the zipper pull into that nice little pocket you made at the end of the zipper gusset. Photo above right.

Toss Pillow Cutting:

For EACH pillow cut:

Center Panel: Two pieces of focus fabric (either SuperFred or Space Pals) 10" wide x 15" long

Solid Accents: Two strips each of two colors (I used orange and yellow with Space Pals and blue and green with SuperFred) 3/4" x 30" long.

Outer Pieces: From coordinating print (Galaxy), for each pillow cut one piece 10" x 30" and another piece 5" x 30". If your coordinating print has a distinct up and down, cut two 15" lengths and piece and sew following the instructions for the center panel.

Toss Pillow Construction:

Piecing of the top is done with 1/4" seam allowances.

1. Hem one long side of the 10 x 30" outer piece: Turn under 1/2", press, then turn again. Topstitch.
2. Sew the pillow top in this sequence, pressing the seams as stitched., then pressing seams toward the center.

Print (5" wide piece)-solid-solid-focus fabric-solid-solid-print (hemmed 10" wide piece).



3. Top stitch the seam allowances in place. I used thread to match the colors/prints.
4. With right sides together, sew a $\frac{1}{4}$ " seam around the two long sides and the end without the hem.
5. Press the seams as stitched, then press the seams OPEN as best you can—it'll be hard to get into the corner. Photos below. I use a 24" piece of inexpensive stair railing as my pressing tool.



6. Turn the pillow right side out, fold right on the seam line and press to create a knife edge. The seam should be as close to perfectly on the edge as you can get it.
7. Fold the open end to the inside so that the same amount of fabric shows on either end. Be sure the extra fabric that is turned to the inside is snugged up to the edges, as you will "catch" the turned in bit in the next two steps.

8. Top stitch around the open edge $\frac{3}{8}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ " away from the edge. Then, topstitch around the three other sides. Optional: add a second line of topstitching, as seen in the photo below.
9. Slip your pillow inside and tuck it between the outside of the pillow and the turned-in edge.

Voila!



Blogposts with larger photos and helpful tips were published on March 9 and March 12, 2020. You can use the Search box or Archive drop-down menu to find the posts here:

<http://www.sarahannsmith.com/weblog/>

There are also links to this pattern and the posts on my Resources page. Scroll to tutorials and look for Everyone's a Kid Floor Cushions and Toss Pillows.

<http://www.sarahannsmith.com/resources.php>

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