

American Patchwork & Quilting



1 MILLION

PILLOWCASE CHALLENGE



Teaching Tools

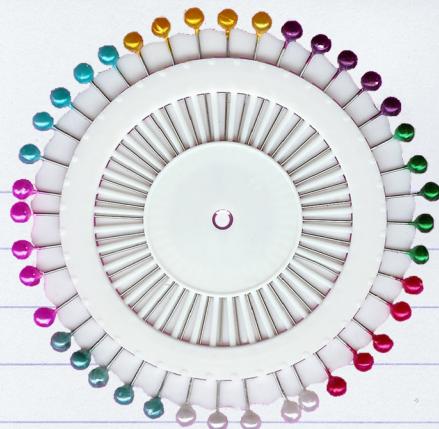
introduction

Encourage the next generation of sewers and quilters by participating with youngsters in the 1 Million Pillowcase Challenge. Teaching children how to sew provides valuable life skills, fosters creativity, and boosts self-esteem. And sewing a pillowcase for charity teaches a child compassion and empathy.

We have created two great pillowcase patterns specifically geared toward teaching children to sew. The first pattern is our "roll it up" pillowcase. Kids will love the "magic" that happens when they turn the tube right side out. The second pattern is a drawstring pillowcase that doubles as a bag.

You'll also find a handy supply checklist, advice on preparing for a successful pillowcase event, and general tips for sewing with kids.





supply checklist for basic pillowcase

- Sewing machines
- Fabrics (we find precut pillowcase kits work best)
- Printed patterns
- Thread
- Pins
- Pincushions
- Marking pens or pencils
- Rulers
- Small scissors
- Irons
- Ironing boards
- Basket, clothesline, or other collection device for finished pillowcases

add these supplies for drawstring bag/pillowcase

- Large safety pins
- Unsharpened pencils with erasers

prep work

We find it works best to cut the fabrics and combine them into pillowcase kits in advance of the event. You can put the two pieces together in a resealable storage bag or simply pin the two fabrics together.

11 Gather supplies.

12 Thread sewing machines and fill bobbins. It's great to have a few extra filled bobbins as well.

13 Stash basic tools such as small scissors, a seam ripper, and a pincushion, beside each machine. (We like to tie scissors to the machine or table with a ribbon.)

14 Mark a seam allowance ($1/2"$ from the needle) on each machine bed with painter's tape or masking tape.

15 Set the speed on each machine, if possible, knowing that slower is better and safer in this situation.

16 Sew one pillowcase to use as an example and set aside a pillowcase kit for demonstrating the steps.

17 Print enough patterns to allow each child to have one.



general tips

Prepare a list of possible recipient charities in advance of the gathering, then let the kids choose the winner.

Allow the sewers to select their own kit of fabrics. (The kids we've worked with loved this step!)

Be sure to have enough adults/teens as mentors to supervise sewing and help with any issues.

Set up a pressing station and show the kids how to press. Another option is to have a pressing "coach" staff the station.

For children ages 3-6 years old, place the sewing machine foot pedal on the table and have them "drive" while you sit at the machine and "steer."