



Beginners Fabric Course



SUSTAINABILITY & MANAGEMENT Workbook Pt 3



www.sheillasewingschool.com

with
video
tutorial
support

Thinking about Fabric

Before you start a project you will need to think about fabric as well as threads, buttons, zips and everything else you need to complete the project successfully.

Fabric is expensive. A metre of a decent quality cotton will probably be around £15 from a shop. We need to think about what fabric we already have that could be useful.

Sustainability means avoiding using up resources to make more fabric when there is fabric not being used. All fabric takes resources to make - plants, water, power for machines etc. There are several ways to be sustainable with regard to the use of fabric.

Upcycling is the re-use of discarded objects or materials to create a product of higher quality or value than the original. Try the **tote bag** project using plastic bags if you want to upcycle.

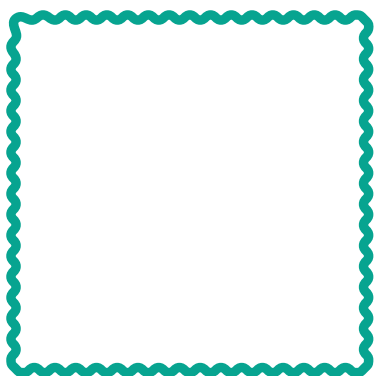
Recycling is the use of items that would go into the rubbish - such as using fabric already in the house. Examples might be towels, duvets, clothing. Try the **face wipe** project if you want to recycle a towel.

Re-purposing is adapting an item to another use. Such as making a skirt from an old pair of jeans. Any of the projects could be made using an item you re-purpose.

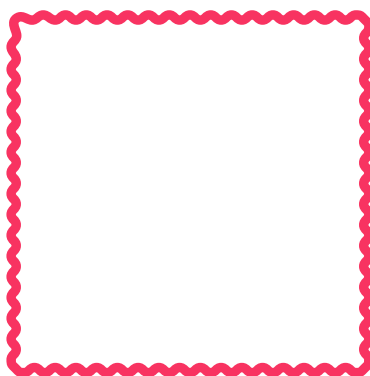
Have a scavenger hunt in your house to find fabric you could use for the projects. Remember to look for buttons, zips, closures and trims too.

Fabric Scavenger Hunt

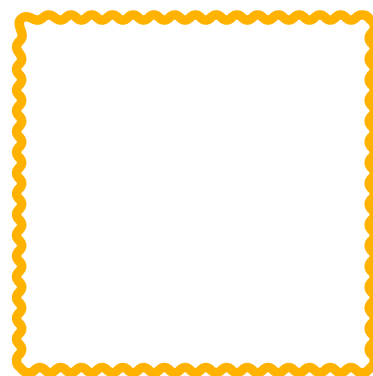
Check everywhere at home and with relatives, friends and neighbours. Make a note of what you found and where. Snip a swatch of everything and glue it to the fabric swatch page.



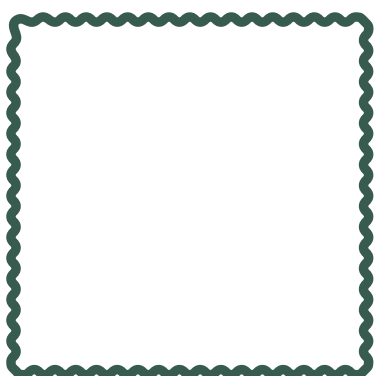
Kitchen cloths



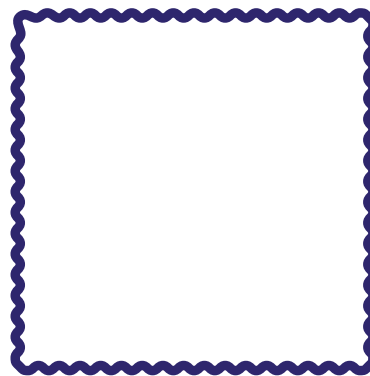
Duvet & Sheets



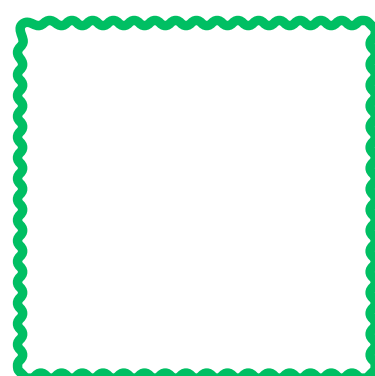
Towels & Flannels



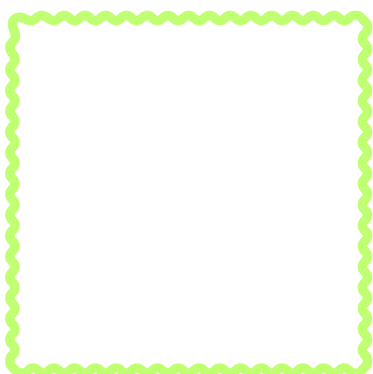
Shirts



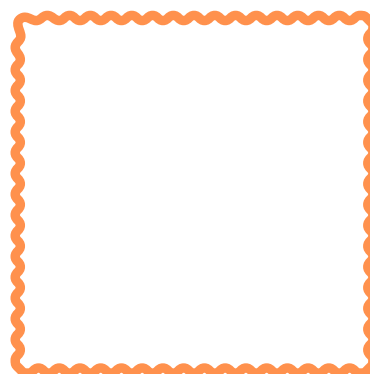
Dresses



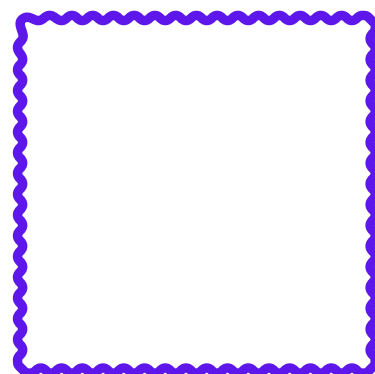
T-shirts



Fabric lengths and scraps



Zips, buttons



Lace and trims

Wash everything, press and then fold neatly and store somewhere safe.



Finding Fabric

Once you have found all the fabric that could be used in your house, think about other places you could find fabric.



What did you find?

Family



What did you find?

Friends



What did you find?

Charity Shop



What did you find?

Ebay




What did you find?

Recycled fabric shop



What did you find?

Etsy




What did you find?

Car Boot Sale



What did you find?

Garage Sale



What did you find?

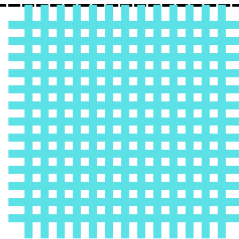
Curtain/Sofa Shop

Fabric Facts

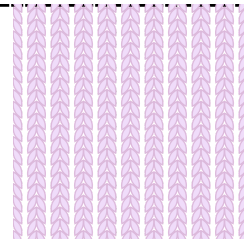
Let's look at the basics about fabrics.



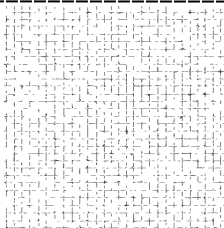
Yarn is the threads that makes up fabric. Yarns can be natural or synthetic.



Woven fabric is made of yarns that go over and under one another.



A **knit** is made when one loop is pulled through another.



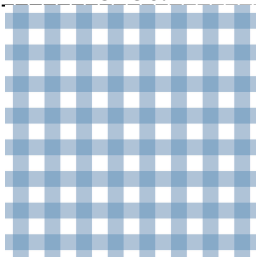
Non-woven fabric is made when heat or pressure is applied to fibres.



Natural fibres are made from cotton; flax; silk; and wool.



Manmade fibres are usually made with chemicals added to natural fibres



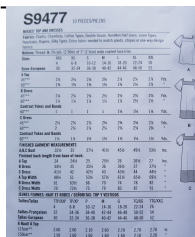
Blended fabric mixes natural and manmade fibres



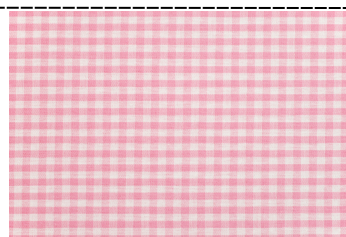
The fabric label will tell you the **composition** of the fabric



Size, fabric and **care instructions** are on the label



The reverse side of the pattern envelope will suggest fabrics to use
©Dr Sheila M Leahy



Some fabrics have no directional pattern and are easier to cut



Some fabrics have a directional pattern which affects cutting out. 4

More Fabric Facts



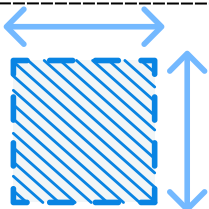
The **right side** of the fabric is where the pattern or design is bright.



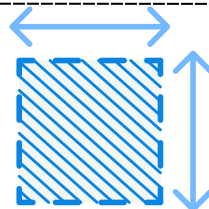
The **wrong side** of the fabric is usually plain white but can be a duller colour.



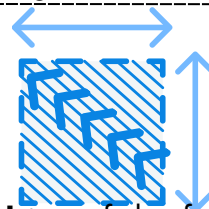
A **selvedge** (selvage in US) is the finished edge of the fabric. Sometimes it contains details of the designer and colours.



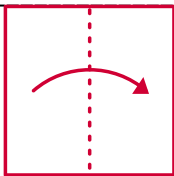
The **width** of the fabric is from selvedge to selvedge. This is the **cross grain** of the fabric.



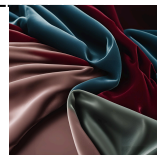
The **length** of the fabric is from cut edge to cut edge. This is the **straight grain** of the fabric.



The **bias** of the fabric is across the fabric. This is the **bias grain** of the fabric. It has the most stretch.



The **fold** of the fabric is where the fabric is folded on the bolt and is cut folded.



The **Nap** of the fabric is a raised surface on some fabric such as velvet. When the fabric is touched the surface moves and shades light and dark.



Great care must be taken when cutting a napped fabric. The grain lines on the pattern must all face the same way.



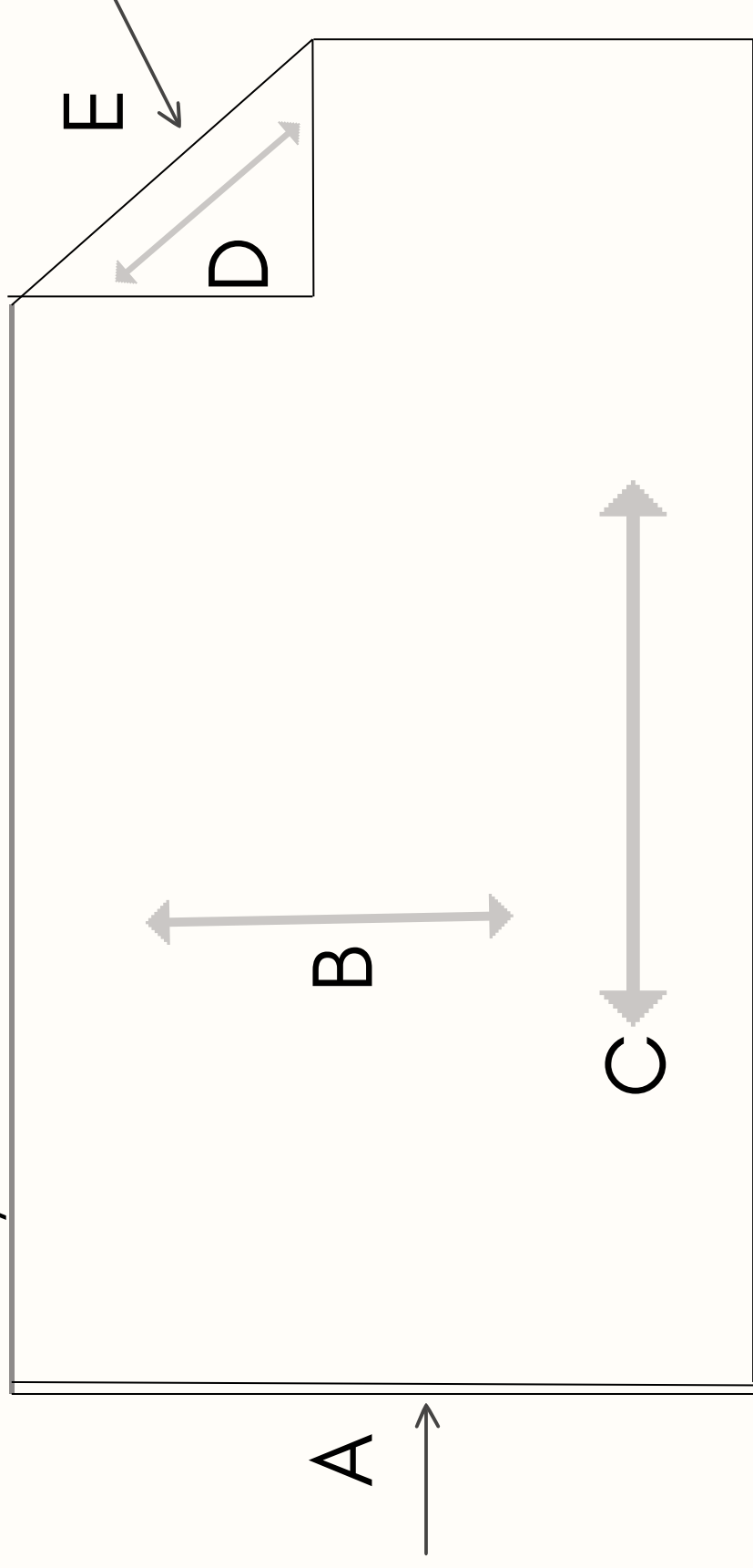
Interfacing is available in a wide variety of weights. It supports the fabric to keep in shape.

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DIAGRAM 1

Fabric Elements

Identify different elements of the fabric:



A

B

C

D

E



Fabric Stash & Swatch Record

When adding fabric to your stash. clip a small piece and put it into your record.

Fabric Name:
Bought/Scavenged from:
Fibre:
Used in Project:

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Fibre:
Used in Project:

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Bought/Scavenged from:
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Pressing before, during and after sewing

Pressing is an important part of the sewing process and gives your project a more professional finish.

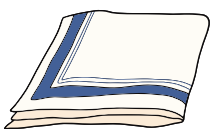
Pressing also can stretch or shrink fabric, mark fold lines, fuse sewing supports to the fabric, and ease a puckered seam.



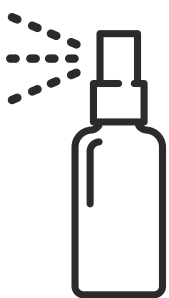
Finger Pressing - flatten the seam out immediately after sewing and gently rub your finger along it - avoid stretching the seam.



Pressing with iron - flatten the seam out immediately after sewing and gently press down along the seam.



Pressing cloth - use with delicate fabrics to avoid burning.



Sprays & Fusible - if you have used sprays, fusibles or starches in your project ensure sticky stuff does not get onto the iron plate by using the pressing cloth.



Fabric management

Fabric, however, you obtain it, whether new or pre-loved, is precious. Keeping your fabric in good condition means that it will be ready for use when you need it.

Press (and starch if you wish) your fabric before you use it. Remove all creases and folds before laying out for cutting.

Neaten the cut edges of the fabric you have used so that each edge is straight. Keep the 'scraps' separately in a bag. Scraps can be used as stuffing for toys.

Store your fabric neatly folded. If you can, store each colour separately. Store the fabric in boxes or bags to keep it clean and keep moths and dust away.

Building a stash - you may start to find you are collecting fabric without have a project in mind for it. You are stashing (storing) the fabric for future use. This is fine if you have room to store it correctly. Remember to keep your swatch record up-to-date so you can see at a glance what fabrics you have.

Fabric Size Chart

Item	Metric Size	Imperial Size	Quantity of fabric
King Quilt	274 x 241 cm	108 x 95 inches	c 8 yards/7 metres
Double Quilt	213 x 228 cm	84 x 90 inches	c 7 yards/6 metres
Single Quilt	150 x 200 cm	60 x 80 inches	c 6 yards/6 metres
Lap Quilt	90 x 120 cm	36 x 48 inches	c 3 yards/3 metres
Baby Quilt	91 x 152 cm	36 x 60 inches	c 3 yards/3 metres
Fat Quarter	46 x 56 cm	18 x 22 inches	A quarter of a yard/metre cut across the width
Long Quarter	23 x 112 cm	9 x 44 inches	A quarter of a yard/metre cut across the width
Fat Eighth	25 x 56 cm	10 x 22 inches	A eighth of a yard/metre cut across the width
Jelly Roll	20 - 40 strips 6 x 112cm	20 - 40 strips 2.5 x 44 inches	strips cut across the width of the fabric
Honey Bun	20 - 40 strips 4 x 112 cm	20 - 40 strips 1.5 x 44 inches	
Dessert Roll		5 strips 20 inches	
Layer Cake	20 25 x 25 cm squares	20 10 x 10 inch squares	
Charm pack	20 - 40 12.5 x 12.5 cm squares	20 -40 5 x 5 inch squares	

Single Quilt takes: 4-5 yards/4-4.5 metres or 2 layer cakes (10" x 10") or 7 Charm Square packs (5" x 5") or 34 mini-charm packs (2.5" x 2.5") or 20 Fat Quarters.

FABRIC SIZES

Width of Fabric 44" (112cm)

LONG QUARTER - width of fabric 44" x 9" (112 x 23cm)

CHARM -
5" X 5" (12.5
X 12.5cm)

LAYER CAKE -
10" X 10"
(25.4 X
25.4cm)

FAT QUARTER -
Half width of fabric 22" x
18" (56 x 46cm)

Length of Fabric 36" (92cm)

Congratulations

You have learned about fabric, how to look for it and care for it. Now you need to start using it. Find a project that interests you and starting cutting and sewing!

Start to understand and feel the pleasure that sewing brings to your life.