

How to Sew a Steering Wheel Cover



In this project, you will create a steering wheel cover like the one seen in the picture to the left. This project is intended for 4-H youth who wish to become familiar with basic sewing skills. Before beginning this project, make sure that you are familiar with the book "Let's Sew!" by Nancy Zieman or have another basic sewing book on hand, and also make sure that you have a 4-H supervisor present to help you. You can find a glossary of sewing terms used in these instructions on the next page.

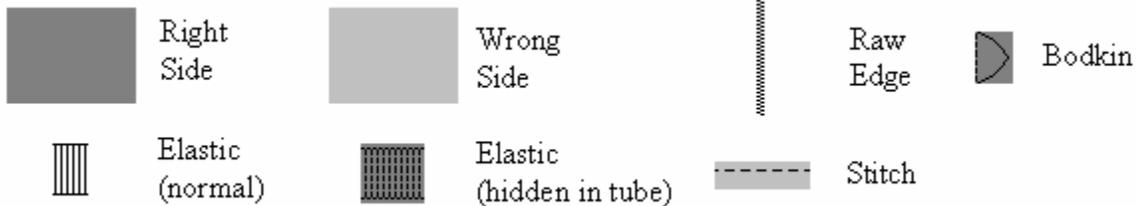
Materials:

- Tape Measure
- Sewing Machine
- Shears
- Iron
- Pins
- Fleece style fabric (see steps 1 and 2 for size)
- Thread (matches fabric)
- 1/2 inch wide elastic bands
- Bodkin or a large safety pin

Glossary

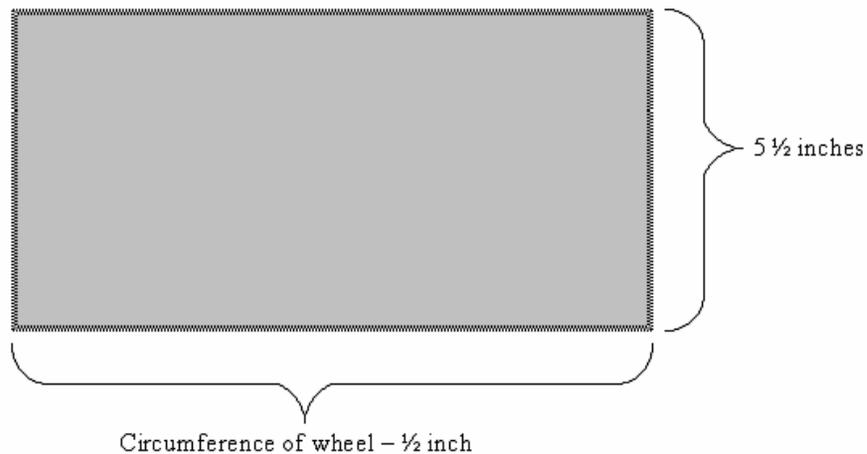
- Backstitch:** Used at the beginning and end of a machine sewn seam to anchor the seam in place; it involves a couple of extra stitches back and forth. Page 36 of Let's Sew contains additional information.
- Baste Stitch:** Machine or hand stitch used to secure two or more layers of fabric before final stitching.
- Bodkin:** A tool used to attach a surface in order to draw it through a casing.
- Straight Seam:** Stitches made in a continuous line. Usually used to secure a seam.
- Zigzag Stitch:** Stitches made on the diagonal. Usually used to prevent raveling.

Key for Diagrams



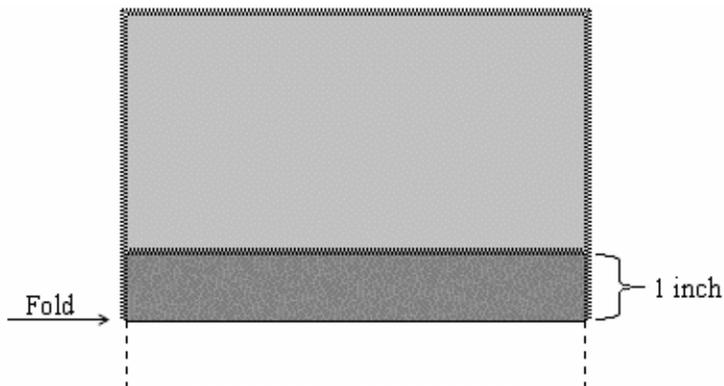
Prepared by Justin Cooke, Christopher Deitz and Michael Matz; in consultation with Jan Scholl, associate professor, extension education, and Marika Seigel, English 202C instructor.

Measuring and Cutting

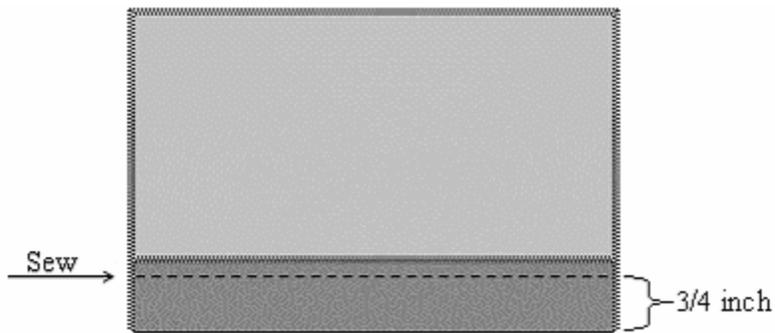


1. Measure the distance around the outside of the steering wheel using a tape measure. Then subtract $\frac{1}{2}$ inch from this measurement.
2. Cut a rectangle of fabric that is $5\frac{1}{2}$ inches wide and as long as the measurement found in step one.
3. Measure two pieces of elastic. Each piece should be half of the length of the fabric you just cut.

Folding and Stitching

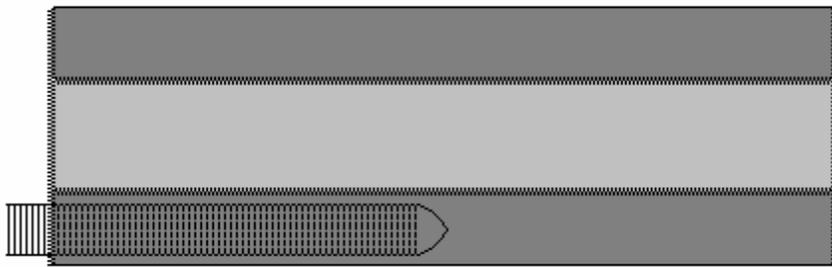


4. Fold over 1 inch of fabric, along the length, onto the wrong side of the fabric.
5. Press down the 1 inch fold of the fabric flat with a warm iron to stiffen the fold.

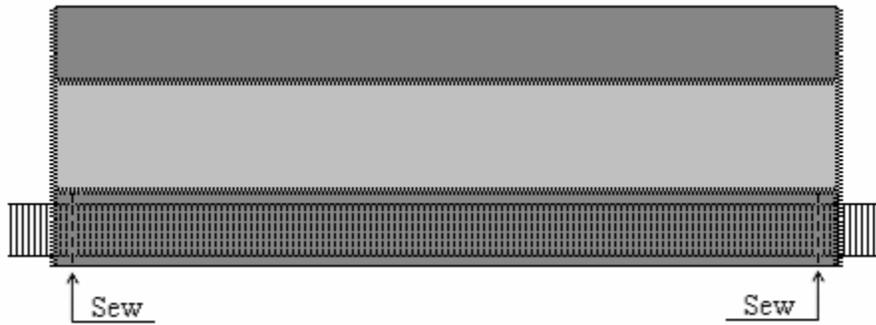


6. **Baste stitch** $\frac{3}{4}$ inch from the edge of the fabric with the needle and thread to secure the fold.
7. Stitch a **straight seam** over this **baste stitch** with the sewing machine. This creates an open channel along the length.
8. Repeat steps 4-7 along the opposite edge of the fabric.

Adding Elastic

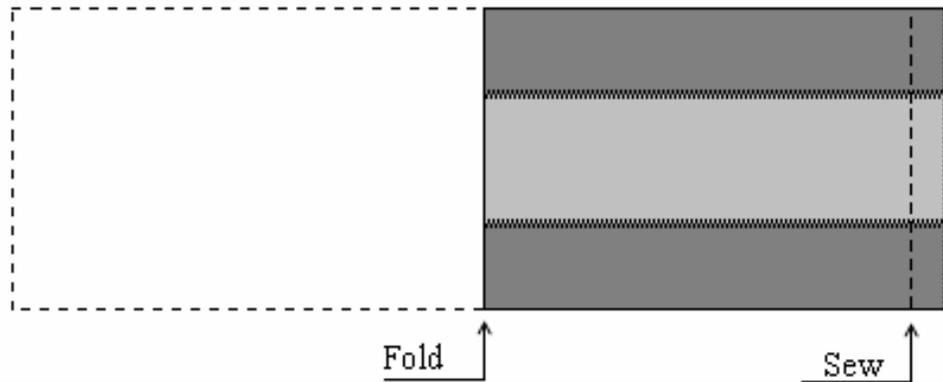


9. Attach one end of the elastic to either a **Bodkin** or safety pin. Thread the pin/**Bodkin** with the attached elastic through one of the open channels. Refer to pages 44 and 45 of "Lets Sew" for help with using a **Bodkin**.
10. Once the elastic is completely in the channel, stitch the end of the elastic that is not attached to the pin/**Bodkin** to the end of the channel using the sewing machine.
11. Continue to pull the elastic through the channel until it comes out of the other end.



12. Pin the exposed elastic onto the channel end to secure it.
13. **Zigzag stitch** to secure each end of elastic to the inside of the channel. Stitch back and forth over the width of the elastic several times.
14. Repeat steps 9-13 using the other piece of elastic and the other open channel.

Finishing Stitching



15. Fold the fabric in half so that the ends are back-to-back, with the wrong side exposed.
16. Sew a **straight stitch** 1/4 inch from raw edge, catching both edges of the elastic in the seam.
17. **Backstitch** 1/4 inch from the raw edge on both sides to secure the seam.
18. Trim the excess elastic using the shears.
19. Press the ends flat using a warm iron
20. Turn your steering wheel cover so that the right side is facing out. Wrap the steering wheel cover around the steering wheel to complete the project.

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Prepared under the supervision of Jan Scholl, associate professor of agricultural and extension education.

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