

CHENILLE INSTRUCTIONS USING THE CROSSHATCHING RULER

Fabric selection—Choose homespun or shirting yardage. Shirting looks like flannel but is brushed cotton. These fabrics are woven from dyed thread instead of printed on, and read the same on the front and back. This is important with chenille projects.

Amount of fabric needed---

Decide on the number of layers you will use. Four is the minimum number of layers and makes a drapery throw. Five works well, making the throw heavier and fluffier. With five layers, you may stitch your lines a little farther apart and still have a good result. More layers than five will be difficult to slash. I have found shirting 60" wide, but most homespuns are 44". You cannot use pieced fabric with this technique. Decide on the length of your throw. Multiply the length by the number of layers and add six inches to that total. Purchase that amount of fabric—don't worry about buying extra fabric to match up plaids or stripes—it is futile to try to match so many layers and will not show when the fabric is slashed. Example—you want a throw to measure 44" by 60" with 5 layers. $60" \times 5 = 300"$ plus an extra 6" equals 306" of fabric, or 8.5 yards. Use your Joann's coupon or wait for a sale to buy some homespun! If you are making a baby throw, a 44" square is a great size and takes less than 6 ½ yards with five layers and just over 5 yards with four layers.

How to layer and load fabric---

Cut your first (backer) fabric six inches longer than the chosen finished size and load on the frame with the selvages on the sides and cut edges pinned to the leaders.

Cut the rest of the fabric in pieces exactly the same length. Layer the pieces on the floor or table and pin-baste all the edges. Lay the pinned piece on top of the loaded backer. This pinned piece will float—pin at the top, smooth out and let the rest hang down the front of the table.

Spacing the stitching lines—For spacing of crosshatching lines, there are two methods. The easiest is to place a line of tape on the underside of the ruler the distance apart you would like the crosshatching to be. One inch is too far apart unless you have a massive number of layers (more than 5). Three-quarters of an inch works, but half-inch is dense and fluffy when slashed. Lots more stitching, though! REMEMBER-- when you place the tape you must take into account the width of your hopping foot! If you want a half-inch distance, place the tape at one-quarter inch since the hopping foot will add a quarter inch more. The second method is to mark across the top edge, using your favorite method, the distance apart you would like the lines to be. Also REMEMBER, the distance horizontally across (say one inch) will make your diagonal lines about three-quarters of an inch apart after stitching. It's that diagonal line/math thing involving right triangles. Arrrggghhh! Math!! If you are confused—get some graph paper and mark an inch horizontally—then draw 45 degree lines using that spacing. You will see that the lines are closer together than you might expect. You will only need to mark once—that's at the top edge. Into the body of the quilt, you will be following your original lines of

stitching. So, it is important that the first channels be as evenly stitched as possible. My advice—use the tape!!

Stitching—Start at the upper left corner, needle down on the backer, slide the ruler into position, start and stitch as far towards you as you can. Needle up, push the machine to the right, slide the ruler over to line up your tape edge with the previous stitched line, needle down, start and stitch back up and off the fabric onto the backer at the top. There are no threads to break with this technique until you finish stitching the entire stitching field—drag your thread at the bottom of the line over to the next line of stitching. At the top and bottom, stitch off the fabric and onto the backer to travel to the next channel of stitching. The channels must be open all the way across the quilt so you can slash them at the end. When you reach the sides, those channels must stay open as well, so stitch off the fabric and drag the thread to the next spot. All the dragged threads will be automatically clipped when the throw is slashed and will never show in all the fluff.

Continuing the stitching—After the first area is all stitched, advance the top to the next area. You will have “short rows” in the space below your first line of stitching. Fill those in, advance so the ended stitching lines are close to the top, needle down in the first line of previous stitching about four stitches back. Slide the ruler over to the hopping foot, stitch towards you, needle up, drag to the right, slide the ruler over, stitch up to the next line, over-stitch about four stitches, stop, needle up, drag to the next line-- four stitches back, needle down, slide ruler, stitch, drag to next line, stitch,look how fast you are getting!! Check occasionally to make sure your lines are spaced correctly. If you started with good spacing, you can continue down the whole thing with just an adjustment or two. Triangular-shaped areas on the left side will need to be filled in before advancing to a full stitching field. This is a very forgiving project—if you are off a bit, it really won't show after the top is slashed. Important note—do not sew closed any of the channels you have sewn. You will be slashing all across the entire diagonal so all channels top/sides/bottom need to stay open.

Slashing— Leave the throw on the frame. Invest in a slash cutter with a bottom guard—scissors will take forever and hurt your hands. The slash cutter has a blade that stays stationary. When one section gets dull, you rotate the blade in the holder to a sharp area and continue. It will take one blade to do each throw. Starting at any channel at the bottom edge, insert the bottom guard into the fabric layers with just one layer underneath the guard and your three (or four) layers above. Keep the tension tight on the top. Slash the fabric as far as you can reach. Slash all channels, roll the top back, insert and slash all across, continue. This is the fun part! Slash, slash, roll,—all the way to the top edge.

Finishing—Make sure you have slashed every channel and that you have slashed the top layers—it will be pretty obvious if you missed a channel, but if you miss a layer of fabric, it will show after fluffing and is an easy fix at that time. Remove from the frame. Trim the edges that were attached to the leaders so they match the body of the throw. The rectangle you started with is now a slight parallelogram because the diagonal stitching in the same direction skews the fabric. You may square it up—but I did not and after washing and fluffing, it is not that noticeable. You may also bind it if you like. Do this

before washing and fluffing for the best result—a little wider binding is recommended to give it a tailored look. I did not bind mine. Throw it in the washer, check the lint trap, throw it in the dryer, check the lint trap many times during the drying process, now it's done! Use a commercial-size laundromat dryer if the throw is big—easier on your machines. If you have tags and threads at the edges, simply trim them off.

These throws can be made in about three hours from loading to unpinning—great for that emergency baby gift—or make some to sell!

Instructions from Linda Rech copyright 2009

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